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Thesis

JESUS' TEACHINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM
OF GOD IN PARABLE

by
Henry Morse Emerson
(A.B., Wesleyan University, 1928)

submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
1933

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HENRY ROSE (1973)
(A.S., Wesleyan University, 1973)

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JESUS' TEACHINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN PARABLE

Introduction

#1 The parable and the writer's purpose

The parables of Jesus have long appealed to the writer as a fruitful field of investigation. They present a phase of Jesus' teaching that is by no means trivial. At the same time the greatness of the parables affords us not a small glimpse of the caliber of the Master. The parables are rich in the teachings of Jesus, so that to know something about them is to give one not a small part of the truths that Jesus taught. However, the purpose of this thesis is not to make a general study of the parables of our Lord. The purpose is to study the parables with the view of learning from them what they have to say concerning Jesus' teachings of the kingdom of God. Hence, it is the kingdom phase as it is to be found in the parables that we shall examine. This means that not all the parables of Jesus will be considered for not all deal with the kingdom of God. It also means that our subject will not take us into Jesus' teachings elsewhere concerning the kingdom, but we shall limit ourselves strictly to the parables alone.

While the problem in the thesis is to study the kingdom of God as found in parable, we must prepare the way for this by an examination of what the parable is. For there has been so much misunderstanding of the parable and its nature and interpretation that wrong interpretations have been made of Jesus'

THE PARABLES OF JESUS TEACHING CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN PARABLES

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While the problem in the thesis is to study the Kingdom of God as found in parables, we must prepare the way for this by an examination of what the parable is. For there has been so much misunderstanding of the parable and its nature and interpretation that wrong interpretations have been made of Jesus'

teachings in the parables. Therefore in this introduction we shall make a comprehensive study of the parable itself in order that we may correctly interpret Jesus' teachings on the kingdom of God as we find them in parable.

27 MAY 1960

1. The first part of the report is a summary of the work done during the last year. It is a very brief summary, but it gives a good idea of the progress made. The second part is a more detailed account of the work done during the last year. It is a very detailed account, but it is not as good as the first part. The third part is a summary of the work done during the last year. It is a very brief summary, but it gives a good idea of the progress made. The fourth part is a more detailed account of the work done during the last year. It is a very detailed account, but it is not as good as the first part.

27 MAY 1960

#2 Derinition of the word parable

In examining the parable critically we need first of all to define it. Etymologically the word parable is from the Greek word paraballein, meaning "to throw beside", "to set side by side". While this does not tell us a great deal, we are limiting our use of the word in this thesis to that type of literature that is found in the Bible. It is essential that we distinguish the parable from certain figures of speech, especially the allegory. In the Hebrew we find one word for the terms parable and proverb. Parables, however, are essentially expanded or lengthened similes. As one readily observes many parables begin with the words "the kingdom of Heaven is like". The parable is a placing ^{of something} alongside of something else for the sake of comparison, for the sake of making a meaning clearer. "'Parable' is, therefore, most properly applied to a story of some familiar or, at least, intelligible incident which serves by comparison or contrast to illustrate some truth less familiar or less readily understood and appreciated".¹ It is possible to regard the simile and the metaphor as parables, at least in germ. This we find at times in the New Testament. When Jesus said that a house divided against itself could not stand, Mark says he was speaking in parable, 3:23ff. Likewise Luke, 5:36 & 6:39, writing of Jesus' words on the patching of old garments, and of the blind leading the

¹Wood, Abingdon Commentary, p.914

In examining the parable critically we must first of all be aware of its etymology. The word parable is from the Greek word *parabolē*, meaning "to throw beside", "to set side by side". While this does not tell us a great deal, we are reminded of the use of the word in this sense in the type of literature that is found in the Bible. It is essential that we distinguish the parable from certain figures of speech, especially the allegory. In the former we find one word for the many parables and proverb. Parables, however, are essentially expanded or lengthened similes. As one readily observes any parable begins with the words "The Kingdom of Heaven is like". The parable is a *simile* or *analogy*, something like for the sake of comparison, for the sake of making a point clearer. "Parables" is, therefore, most properly applied to a story of some familiar or, at least, intelligible incident which serves by comparison or contrast to illustrate some other less familiar or less readily understood and accepted truth. It is possible to regard the simile and the personification as parables, at least in part. This we find at times in the New Testament. When Jesus said that a house divided against itself could not stand, Mark says he was speaking in parables. Likewise Luke, 9:17, writing of Jesus' words on the meaning of the parables, says of the blind leading the blind.

blind, speaks of these as parables. In other words, comparisons such as shown above do not necessarily need to be made stories. As a rule the parable is a story; but it does not have to be. The likeness of simile and parable is in their being built on a single unit of comparison.²

The metaphor is a figure of speech that implies a comparison, although it does not expressly state it. Metaphors rest on comparison and in this broader sense may be considered as parables. An example of this is seen in Mark 7:17--- Jesus says that it is not what goes into a man that defiles him; it is what comes out. Compare also Matthew 15:15, where he deals with the same situation, and Luke 4:23, where Jesus quotes the proverb, "Physician heal thyself". In John 16:29, a different Greek word is used, namely, paroimia, with the idea of enigma or riddle.

While the simile and the metaphor have this association with and relationship to the parable, the latter is very different from the fable and the allegory and should not be confused with them. It is not difficult to distinguish between fable and parable, but for centuries there was the confusion of treating the parables as allegories. In the fable, animals talk, have the feelings of human beings, and are responsive in the same ways that men are. This is never to be found in the parable. The parable almost invariably follows natural law and truth in every respect. "The parable is constructed to set

²Lowstuter, Question List on the Teachings of Jesus

claim, agrees or disagrees as to the truth of the matter. In other words, comparison-
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²Lowmeyer, *Question Disc on the Teachings of Jesus*

forth a truth spiritual and heavenly: this the fable does not do. The fable just reaches that pitch of morality which the world will understand and approve".³ On the other hand to point out and ~~to to see and to to~~ recognize the differences between the parable and the allegory is not so easy. In the past it has been the vogue to treat many of the parables as allegories. The two types are similar in that they seek to explain the unfamiliar by the familiar, to show an ethical or spiritual truth by comparison with something similar in nature or human nature, or in daily life. There is, however, to the parable a realism that the allegory does not have. The allegory requires a key to understand it; the parable is a story whose truth generally speaking is immediately evident. The important fact to remember is that the parable always has one great point ~~the to~~ brings out. There may be lesser points that tend to confuse the listener, but if this is known, he will give his attention to getting the one central truth. The lesser truths can be taken care of as such. "The allegory is a succession of metaphors or points of resemblance which must have connection with one another, and each one of which must be interpreted".⁴ Some of Jesus' parables approach the allegory in type; for example, see the Parable of The Good Shepherd, or the Parable of The Sheepfold, both of which are found in The Gospel of John.

³Trench, Notes on the Parables, p.10

⁴Lowstuter, Question List

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Truman, Notes on the Parables, p. 10

Lawrence, Question List

#5 The nature of a parable

In order that we may understand the parable more clearly and grasp the truths in the parables concerning the kingdom of God, we shall expand upon what has gone before and examine the nature of the parable, especially as Jesus used it. We narrow the subject down to saying that as a rule Jesus' parables are similes that have been expanded. This is true of most of Jesus' parables. They are stories in which two realms, two truths, one less well known, are laid side by side. The kingdom of Heaven is like--- like a grain of mustard seed, like a king, like unto leaven,--- the kingdom of Heaven is like these, but of course these comparisons are strictly and completely qualified: "the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field", Mt. 13:44. The parable here is used to describe the less familiar by means of the known or the self-evident.

The parable is essentially didactic in form. This is an underlying part of its nature. By the very fact that it compares two things, one unknown or less familiar, it is unavoidable that the listener or reader learns and acquires information concerning the central aspect of the story. It is not to be thought that within the individual parable the truths found are of relatively equal value. This is not so. In general and as a rule, the parable teaches one specific central truth. There is one smashing idea to be sought in every par-

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able. For example the Parable of The Mustard Seed teaches the expansive growth and power of the kingdom of God. At the same time this does not mean that there is only one lesson to be learned from each parable. The books that have been written on the parables show how much homiletic material they contain. There may be several subordinate truths taught by the parables, or from them several moral facts may be inferred, for it is "part of the felicity of the parables that they suggest much more than they expressly teach".⁵ Thus from the Parable of Dives and Lazarus, one may gain secondary teachings, such as the warning, memento mori, which is implied, or one may infer that possibly the separation of the good and the wicked in the next life is absolute and final. Nevertheless it is just at this point that we need to take warning: no secondary truth can be absolutely inferred that is contrary to the central lesson of the parable, or which is not in harmony with the great truths concerning the character of God that Jesus revealed. We must ever keep this in mind as, further on, we interpret the parables. To say dogmatically and absolutely that men who are evil are cut off forever is to compromise God's loving and forgiving character toward all who in meekness and penitence seek His forgiveness. The question naturally arises as to how much of the parable is significant; this will be taken up in the section on the interpretation of the parable.

The difference between the Old Testament parables

⁵Bruce, The Parabolic Teaching of Christ, p. 383

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The difference between the Old Testament parables

and the parables of Jesus is the same as the difference there is between the pupil and his teacher. In the Master's parables strong utterance is the usual thing. It is such that makes parabolic speech natural and enduring. Although some phases of the truth might be painful, Jesus ^{never} toned down his message. At the same time he could be most thoughtfully gentle and kindly in speech. In dealing with men like the Pharisees, however, bold speech was necessary. It is only natural to expect that his parables should have the same piercing and outspoken quality. The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant is a strong assertion that men must be forgiving if they would expect forgiveness from God. Similarly in answering Peter's question that preceded the parable, Jesus took the answer out of the field of arithmetic. For Jesus wanted to emphasize that such is the character of God toward them that seek forgiveness.

Characteristic of the parables is the fact that often they may often stand in sharp contrast to each other. For example, consider the Parables of the Soils and of Spontaneous Growth. The latter is an antidote for the former's stern message. The former "gives warning that a seed may fail of fruitfulness because of the stubbornness or shallowness of human earth; whereas (the latter) gives assurance that, despite the unreceptive quality of the soil, the seed has still strong hope of survival".⁶ Both express truths concerning the effect

⁶Buttrick, The Parables of Jesus, p.18

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hope of survival." ² Both express truths concerning the effect

² Butcher, The Parables of Jesus, p. 18

of the kingdom of God upon men; both are uttered with that directness and strength of expression characteristic of Jesus.

In the Parable of the Children At Play, this boldness of Jesus is brought out, showing how different John and Jesus were from their lukewarm age. Neither John nor Jesus pleased the people perfectly. Their age had substituted form for reality, and, like children at play, had set a greater value to the form than to the real.

...into parabolic expression, suggestions, or teachings, of great and eternal principles without having to define them with the exactitude of law, or that not only his own age, but posterity, should have them in a form that would not diminish their reality and value. Now in saying this I do not subordinate the immediate occasion on which they were spoken. Schurer puts the matter in the following words: "He chose that form of teaching which would be most plain to the unlearned, most attractive to the intelligent, and most effective to all; that form which would convey the truth most forcibly and preserve it most securely".⁷ Perhaps I have over-stressed the future value that Jesus saw. I think not, however, for it seems to me that as we follow Jesus' life and teachings, we see him preparing his disciples definitely for future trials and labor. We see him definitely grounding them in essential attitudes for the Kingdom Building that he realized increasingly would have to be done without his physical presence. In his warning his disciples of the Jews and of the Pharisees, and in

⁷The Teachings of Jesus in Parables, p. xiv

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#4 The purpose of the parable

What purpose did Jesus have in telling the parables? Why did he tell these stories, some of which are the best known stories in the world today? His purpose was certainly not literary, superb though these stories are as literature. No, very definitely Jesus told these stories, used this vehicle, with certain very concrete views in mind. A primary purpose was probably to put into parabolic expression hints, suggestions, or teachings, of great and eternal principles without having to define them with the exactitude of law, so that not only his own age, but posterity, would have them in a form that would not diminish their reality and value. Now in saying this I do not subordinate the immediate occasion on which they were spoken. Hubbard puts the reason in the following words: "He chose that form of teaching which would be most plain to the unlearned, most stimulating to the thoughtful, and most attractive to all; that form which would convey the truth most forcibly and preserve it most securely".⁷ Perhaps I have overstressed the future value that Jesus saw. I think not, however. For it seems to me that as we follow Jesus' life and teachings, we see him preparing his disciples definitely for future trials and labor. We see him definitely grounding them in essential attitudes for the Kingdom Building that he realized increasingly would have to be done without his physical presence. In his warning his disciples of the leaven of the Pharisees, and in

⁷The Teachings of Jesus in Parables, p.xiv

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The Teachings of Jesus in Parables, p. xiv

his woes against them, I reel that he was preparing them with an eye to the future. Still further in the beautiful and appreciative compliment that Jesus paid to the woman who anointed his head, he reveals that he had a grasp of the future that none of his disciples had, Mt.26:13. At the same time we should not fail to see that Jesus was speaking first of all to those about him at that particular time. It is simply that what he said had the ring of eternity in it, as the centuries have shown us.

Part of the fundamental reason of Jesus in using the vehicle of parabolic expression was his purpose to put his teaching more poignantly than he could have done in any other way. Jesus' teachings by and large transcend the teachings of his day as well as of the Old Testament times. The teachings of the rabbis in parables were moral commonplaces. Jesus' lessons were ultimate. Part of the greatness of the parables is due to the greatness of his truths. Jesus did not teach the ordinary. Thus for example, the point in Matthew's account of the judgment in chapter twenty-five is not that there will be a judgment, but rather that in whatever judgment there is, the guiding principle will be the law of charity.

Consider now Jesus' immediate purpose. Robinson says that "A careful scrutiny of the narrative settings of the parables as they appear in our synoptic records bears out this idea, that the parables were spoken on definite occasions and to meet present needs".⁸ He does not think that Jesus intended

⁸The Parables of Jesus, p.30

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Part of the fundamental reason of Jesus in using the
parable or parabolic expression was his purpose to put his
teaching more poignantly than he could have done in any other
way. Jesus' teachings of and large transcendent the teachings of
his day as well as of the Old Testament times. The teachings of
the people in parables were moral comparisons. Jesus' lessons
were different. Part of the greatness of the parables is due to
the greatness of his truths. Jesus did not teach the ordinary.
Thus for example, the point in Matthew's account of the Judg-
-ment in chapter twenty-five is not that there will be a Judg-
-ment, but rather that in whatever judgment there is, the guid-
-ing principle will be the law of charity.

Consider now Jesus' immediate purpose. Robinson
says that "A careful scrutiny of the narrative settings of the
parables as they appear in our synoptic records bears out this
idea, that the parables were spoken on definite occasions and
to meet present needs." ⁵ He does not think that Jesus intended
⁵The Parables of Jesus, p. 75

his parables to be fixed crystalizations. There is some ground ^{for this, often} ^{for how} ^{is} it true that we do not fully realize at the time how firmly we may be building when we are carrying out some project. Yet I cannot believe that Jesus did not have confidence that what he was teaching would be of lasting value. His attitude as I have shown above bears this out. It also seems borne out in his refutation of the Pharisees' calumny and his teaching of the Unpardonable Sin. Here we have one of those instances where Jesus unconsciously revealed himself.

There seems to be a difference of opinion among the Synoptists as to Jesus' reason for speaking in parables. Matthew says that Jesus taught in parables so that the people could understand: "Therefore speak I to them in parables; because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand", 13:13. On the other hand, Mark and Luke say that Jesus spoke in parables in order that the people would not understand: to his disciples Jesus said, "Unto you is given the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest haply they should turn again, and it should be forgiven them", Mk. 4:11f. All the Synoptists say that Jesus taught the people and also that he taught by parable. Both Mark and Matthew say that without a parable spake he nothing unto them except "as they were able to hear it", Mk. 4:33. We then must choose whether with regard to Jesus' reason for teaching in

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parable we accept Matthew or Mark and Luke. Without resort to Matthew's argument that Jesus spoke in parables to fulfill Scripture, we can note stronger arguments against Mark's and Luke's statement that Jesus spoke in order not to be understood: "(a) He expected to be understood and manifested surprise, perhaps disappointed at his disciples' failure to understand, Mk. 7:18; 8:21; 4:13; Lk. 19:11; & Mt. 15:16. (b) His enemies understood, although they were the ones 'who hearing, hear not', Lk. 16:14; Mk. 12:28; Mt. 15:12; 21:45. (c) What point could Jesus have in rejoicing that the poor had the Gospel preached to them, if he so put the Gospel as to blind them? Evidently many 'common people heard him gladly', Mk. 12:37 and 'harlots and publicans were crowding into the kingdom', Mt. 21:23 [correction: probably verse 31]. (d) Many of his parables are so simple, so direct, of such evident meaning that it does not seem possible he could have had any other purpose than to make his truth more accessible. (e) If he did not want them to understand, why not have remained silent and said nothing at all?"⁹ From the above considerations, from the fact also that Jesus had no esoteric teachings, and from the fact also that to make Jesus speak so that the people would not understand is contrary to our conception of the Master and seems contrary to the way Jesus conceived of man's relationship to the Father, we conclude that here Matthew is closer to the mind of Jesus than the other Synop-
tists. Hence at this point we accept him rather than Mark and

⁹Lowstuter, Question List

Luke.

We may observe other reasons for Jesus' using the parable. At the same time, it is pedantic and deadening to think that Jesus' reasons for using parables may be set down in one-two-three, apple-pie order. The student of the parables must necessarily either follow some such mechanical scheme or else, due to his own lack of ability, divide the reasons into some semblance of outline. Nevertheless it must be kept in mind that Jesus' one object was to know the Father's will and to bring men to his Father and their Father. He used the parable as an instrument in doing this. If we keep this in mind, we shall see the various reasons for his using the parables each as part of the whole purpose.

Thus then another part of the great reason Jesus spoke in parable was to draw out the right attitudes from men, to lay down the truth in such a way that there could be but one answer, and to stimulate men to such conviction that it would result in a verdict that would be carried into action. This explains part of the difficulty one has in understanding certain of the parables: they do require some reflection and thought. Still this was not Jesus' usual way. The truths of many of his parables are self-evident, clear and stimulating to the listener. This inspiration and stimulation is due not merely to the clarity of expression, but to the fact that they were truths that the people had not rightly glimpsed or realized before. The reaction to him "who has ears to hear" is the same that the

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clarity of expression, but to the fact that they were truths
that the people had not rightly glimpsed or realized before.
The reason for this was that the heart is the same that the

multitudes experienced after the Sermon on the Mount--- astonishment. By means of the parable Jesus sought to bring men to conviction in one of two ways: sometimes he explicitly states a command or gives his position. In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus asked the lawyer who he thought proved "neighbor"; and, receiving the expected answer, said, "Go, and do thou likewise", Luke 10:37. At the end of the Parable of the Pharisee and Publican, Jesus said, "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalteth", Lk. 18:14. Again at the end of his parable of the Two Sons, the question he asked of the chief priests and elders had but one answer. He built upon their answer and must have made them feel very uncomfortable. More often, however, Jesus' aim to get conviction and action is implied in the structure of the parable itself. In the Pearl of Great Price-parable, Jesus says that his listeners will be repaid for seeking the Kingdom of God just as truly as was the merchant who sold all in order to obtain the costly pearl. In the Parable of the Prodigal Son, Jesus describes how the elder brother acts, with the view in mind that the Pharisees who were listening would understand why he treated the publicans and sinners as he did; he spoke with the view in mind that they would change their attitude accordingly. Likewise in the Parable of the Blade, Ear, and Corn, Jesus wanted his disciples to know that they were not to think that they alone brought men into the

Jesus answered after the Sabbath on the fourth day of the feast. By means of the parable Jesus sought to bring men to conviction in one or two ways: sometimes he explicitly stated a command or gives his position. In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus asked the lawyer who he thought proved "right?" and, receiving the expected answer, said, "No, and do thou likewise," Luke 10:37. At the end of the parable of the Pharisee and Publican, Jesus said, "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted," Luke 14:14. Again at the end of his parable of the Two Sons, the question he asked of the chief priests and elders had but one answer. He called upon their answer and they have made him feel very uncomfortable. More often, however, Jesus' aim is to get conviction and action is implied in the structure of the parable itself. In the Parable of Great Dinner, Jesus says that his listeners will be repaid for neglecting the Kingdom of God just as truly as was the merchant who sold all in order to obtain the costly pearl. In the Parable of the Prodigal Son, Jesus described how the elder brother acted with the view in mind that the Pharisees who were listening would understand why he treated the publicans and sinners as he did; he spoke with the view in mind that they would change their attitude accordingly. Likewise in the Parable of the Blind, Bart, and Dinn, Jesus wanted his disciples to know that they were not so blind that they alone brought men into the

kingdom, but that God was working in men's hearts in an orderly and gradual way. The disciple "knoweth not how", but like the farmer must accept this as characteristic of the way God works.

Now, much of the parable is significant? How is the parable to be interpreted? Is the truth of the parable so essential that we must look for some solution to it in the teaching of Jesus elsewhere? There are the questions to which we must give consideration. We have seen how difficult it is to interpret the parable. The first of the two parables which Jesus told, the Parable of the Sower and of the Tares, it is more than probable that He intended to furnish us with a key for the interpretation of all. Nevertheless that scholar of the last century did understand the theory underlying the parable, but in his actual interpretation he was not consistent. Perhaps it was because he did not adequately distinguish between parable and allegory. For one of the primary steps to be taken in interpreting the parable is to determine first of all whether the story is a parable or an allegory. If it is a parable, then, as Trapp and others say, the task is to determine the kernel and vital point of the story. Because it is this that actually is the key to understanding the truth of the passage. Look for a moment at the Parable of the Hille, or The Sower as it is more popularly called. This has given interpreters much trouble because of the

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works.

#5 The method of interpretation

The next step that we must take in order to appreciate the parable and be prepared to grasp its teachings about the kingdom of God is to investigate the method of interpretation. How much of the parable is significant? How is the parable to be interpreted? Is the truth of the parable so camouflaged that we must look for some solution to it in the teachings of Jesus elsewhere? These are the questions to which we must now give consideration. We have come some distance at least from the day when Trench could write¹⁰ that when our Lord himself interpreted the two first which he delivered, those of The Sower and of The Tares, it is more than probable that he intended to furnish us with a key for the interpretation of all. Nevertheless that scholar of the last century did understand the theory underlying the parable; but in his actual interpreting he was not consistent. Perhaps it was because he did not adequately distinguish between parable and allegory. For one of the primary steps to be taken in interpreting the parable is to determine first of all whether the story is a parable or an allegory. If it is a parable, then, as Trench and others say, the task is to determine the kernel and vital point of the story, because it is this that actually is the key to understanding the truth of the passage. Look for a moment at the Parable of the Soils, or The Sower as it is more popularly called. This has given interpreters much trouble because of the

¹⁰ ibid, p. 36

interpretation given it supposedly by Jesus. First of all this is a parable and not an allegory. Accordingly it should not be allegorized. Our next step is to look for the central point, namely: that as the sower discovered different kinds of soil, so are people different, and you cannot expect them all to make the same response to the call to the kingdom. After learning the central truth, one continues one's interpretation from the point of view of the main teaching. On this basis we may go on to say that just as soils are different and people are different, so must we expect to find saints in different fields of work, and not only in the ministry and certain professions as some people think. Thus some splendid people will be found in teaching, some in farming, some in very menial posts, and some in places of power and influence. Again, interpreting from the central theme, we see that we must use different methods of approach in reaching people if there are these differences. We cannot give the Gospel to the farmers in the same way that we give it to the machinist. The approach to the man in the street is not the same as the approach to the scientist. In any case in interpreting the parables, we must take care not to confuse issues. The big thing is to find the great lesson of the parable, to find its great comparison. Perhaps this is all that we shall find. It is not essential that every detail of a parable be explained or interpreted. "In any case it is the embodiment of one central thought to which all details are subordinate".¹¹ In other words one's interpretation of a parable

¹¹Hubbard, The Teachings of Jesus in Parables, p.xvi.

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is not to be expository, but topical. It is true that writers on the parables have unfortunately followed the expository method. Such a method is not followed by an art teacher. Neither can it be followed properly in dealing with the parable.

Sometimes the introduction and the end of a parable afford hints as to the essential meaning. For example in the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant, Mt. 18:23-35, there is a suggestion in verse twenty-one where we read that Peter asked, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times?" At the end of the parable Jesus makes application: "So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts", v. 35. To this extent the rules of interpretation grow out of the nature of the parable and the purpose for which it was spoken. Also we must remember that those who heard Jesus, of course were a part of the setting and background and knew his reason for speaking the parables. To the extent that the value and the truth of the parable is implied and directly made out of these given situations---- to that extent the lesson is self-evident.

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#6 Limitations of Jesus' Parables

In order that we may avoid any possible misunderstanding of Jesus' teaching through parable, we should be acquainted with the problem of the parable's limitations. It is a question whether the parables have any limitations and drawbacks of a serious nature. So far as Jesus used them for immediate homiletic value in teaching the people, the writer feels that they are an instrument par excellence. It is true that even those who heard Jesus tell the stories did not always understand their full import. The Pharisees heard sometimes and perceived that the parables were aimed at them, Mt.21:45, but the full implications apparently were not always realized. Now and then the disciples were perplexed, Mt.16:6, and Mk.4:13, but is there a teacher whose words are always received clearly by his students? For us, however, who have these accounts second-hand and do not always know the occasion that drew the parable out, there is more difficulty involved. The variety of interpretations that scholars have rendered is most certain evidence that we are to a certain extent limited in reaching with ease a full understanding of the parables. If then the students of the Bible experience a real struggle to get the truths of these masterful stories, how much more easily may the layman have difficulty!

There have been several possible weaknesses pointed out by scholars of whom Robinson is one. He has dealt with the problems more thoroughly and completely than other

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directly by his audience? For us, however, who have these accounts second-hand and do not always know the occasion that drew the parable out, there is more difficulty involved. The variety of interpretations that scholars have rendered is not

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if we are laymen have difficulties?

There have been several possible weaknesses pointed out by scholars of whom Robinson is one. He has dealt with the problems more thoroughly and ably than they

scholars whom I have studied, and he has gone more particularly into the realm of moral relations as seen in the parables.¹² He very definitely finds a moral problem which must be answered positively and completely if it is to be answered at all effectively. This moral problem arises in a number of the parables of Jesus. The following are some examples. Was the man buying the field with the hidden treasure doing an ethically fair thing? Mt.13:44. Is God like the unscrupulous judge who gives in only to get rid of the persistent woman, Lk.18:1-8? How is one to take the Parable of The Hours, Mt.20:1-16? Likewise in such parables as The Unprofitable Servants, Lk.17:7-10; The Importunate Friend, Lk.11:5-8; and The Unjust Steward, Lk. 16:1-12, Robinson asks what the way out is, for certainly the end does not justify the means. On one occasion Jesus himself in speaking in parable gives his own opinion as to the caliber of the man whom he is using in his parable: "Hear what the unrighteous judge saith", Lk.18:6. As a rule, however, Jesus made no such qualifications in his parables. Let us look at the problem more closely. In the Parable of the Unjust Steward, Jesus is not commending the man because of his wickedness but because of his wisdom. He is not blaming him because of his foresight and desire to provide for the future. It is simply that the man's method of providing for the future is reprehensible. To say that Jesus was inculcating a bad principle at any time in his teachings is to fail utterly to understand him.

¹²The Parables of Jesus, ch.VIII.

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The Parables of Jesus, Ch. VIII.

While the moral difficulty gives me no trouble when I realize that what possible discrepancies in the moral realm are mentioned are condoned by neither the Master nor his listeners, the really big reason the moral difficulty does not bother me is that the discrepancies are all aside from the one central truth. The important thing in the parable is this one great lesson. The rest of the parable is incidental. This is the essential fact that we must keep in mind.

Robinson feels that we cannot think that Jesus intended his teachings through parables to have permanent value because of his use of the reprehensible, and its probable harm if kept. I cannot accept this: it is true that the decades have often missed the heart of the teachings of the Nazarene, but the centuries show that the essential truths and a balanced picture may be had. Again what we must keep in mind is the place and importance of the central truth. This is what must be sought and this alone is essential. What remains is incidental. As I read the Gospels I cannot but realize that Jesus thought in terms of the years ahead. Furthermore the first part of Jesus' narratives is the product of his imagination bound by the principles of probability. Thus it is that "what vexes one in actual life he may gladly enjoy in a picture".¹³ We ought also to perceive that the strongest way Jesus could illustrate his truths and lessons was by reference to the behavior of wicked men, for it was their devotion to their

¹³ibid,p.111

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to perceive that the strongest way Jesus could illustrate his

truths and lessons was by reference to the behavior of wicked

men, for it was their devotion to their

ends and interests that he compared to the earnestness and devotion that the kingdom demands.

It has been said that Jesus' teachings in parables have a double sense. That is, there is one truth for the people and one for the disciples. Notwithstanding this falls before the weight of New Testament scholarship. According to the Gospels any one was welcomed into the kingdom who would come, and all truths were to be known by all in time. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free", John 8:32, and "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now", John 16:12. In the first instance Jesus, speaking "to those Jews that had believed him", says that they shall know all that is to be known to give them a complete life. In the latter quotation addressed more specifically to his apostles as the only ones then present, Jesus tells them that they would be told many other things if they were more ready for them, but that when the Comforter comes, they will be lead to all truth. All that Jesus wanted of any one was an attitude of receptivity. Mark 4:34 says that Jesus "privately to his own disciples --- expounded all things". There is hardly a good reason for thinking that this was an instance when Jesus gave his disciples secret teachings. It would be only natural for the disciples to ask further questions of Jesus when they were alone together. Trench thought that the two parables that are explained were intended as a key to all the parables. If so Jesus did an unsatisfactory piece of work. The interpretation of the Soils-

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ask further questions of Jesus when they were alone together. Trench thought that the two parables that are explained were

intended as a key to all the parables. It so happens that an unsatisfactory piece of work. The interpretation of the Gospels

parable is banal and pedantic,¹⁴ and the same might well be said of the Parable of The Tares. They are no more than what many others might have worked out themselves. Lastly if Jesus' teaching had a double sense, it would necessarily require that he put the particular moral to the end of each parable. On the contrary, however, this was not done either when spoken or when given to the established church.

¹⁴Class Notes, Bk. 2, p. 72.

What he meant when he said, "For it is easier for a camel to enter in through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God", Lk. 18:25! How bitterly have we attacked Jesus for his parables of The Laborers and The House! What exaggeration is to be found in the Parable of The Two Debtors! Any difficulties of understanding Jesus at these points disappear when we see that he was making legitimate use of parable and of hyperbole. We can understand the Master more clearly if we but realize how mentally alert he was, and how untrammelled he could feel in moving about among the children of men.

In this introduction we have quite thoroughly considered the parable, its nature, the method of interpretation, and the promise of its limitations. We have done this in order that we may be prepared to grasp the teachings of Jesus on the kingdom of God as found in the parables. Too often men have failed to understand the Master in the parables because they have not understood the nature of parables. They have taken

parable is parable and parable, ^{1a} and the same might well be said of the Parable of the Tares. They are no more than what many others might have worked out themselves. Lastly if Jesus' teaching had a double sense, it would necessarily require that he put the particular moral to the end of each parable. On the contrary, however, this was not done either when spoken or when given to the established church.

^{1a} Glass Notes, Ex. 2, p. 72.

#7 Conclusion of Introduction

One last consideration to be made before we study Jesus' teachings concerning the kingdom of God in the individual parables concerns his use of paradox, hyperbole and his capacity to anticipate. It was not Jesus' purpose to be a literary purist, nor to be meticulous in his methods, but to drive home by legitimate yet unusual methods the great facts of the character of God. How long and uselessly have men discussed what he meant when he said, "For it is easier for a camel to enter in through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God", Lk.18:25! How bitterly have men attacked Jesus for his parable of The Laborers and The Hours! What exaggeration is to be found in the Parable of The Two Debtors! Any difficulties of understanding Jesus at these points disappear when we see that he was making legitimate use of paradox and of hyperbole. We can understand the Master more clearly if we but realize how mentally alert he was, and how untrammelled he could feel in moving about among the children of men.

In this introduction we have quite thoroughly considered the parable, its nature, the method of interpretation, and the problem of its limitations. We have done this in order that we may be prepared to grasp the teachings of Jesus on the kingdom of God as found in the parables. Too often men have failed to understand the Master in the parables because they have not understood the nature of parables. They have taken

IV. Conclusion or Introduction

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Jesus too literally and have charged him with an attitude and with teachings utterly contrary to his own spirit and to his conception of the kingdom of God to which he was giving his life in whole-hearted devotion. Having come to an understanding of the parable, having examined the method by which we seek for his teachings of the kingdom of God in the parables, we are now ready to consider what the parables themselves teach concerning the kingdom of God.

Classification of the parables is always a pedantic effort, yet it is done for the little value and convenience there is in it. One sees after studying the kingdom of God in the parables that there are two or three natural divisions of the subject. The first is the general division of the nature of the kingdom of God. The second natural division that I have observed is that group of parables dealing with the characteristics and qualities of members of the kingdom of God and also dealing with the stumbling blocks that keep one from the kingdom or an alien in the kingdom. Accordingly, then, I am dividing this second division into two parts, which will compose Sections B and C of this thesis.

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Chapter I

The Parable of Spontaneous Growth, Mk. 4:26-29

The Parable of The Mustard Seed, Mt. 13:31-32; Mk. 13:31; Lk. 13:18-19

The Parable of The Leaven, Mt. 13:33; Lk. 13:20

In Section A of this thesis, we shall examine carefully of the parables that give more generally, and specifically as well as generally, the nature of the kingdom of God. I have never defined in an early work what we meant by this phrase. We borrowed from the Inter-testamental Period and from his own time, and to which he gave his own content. Nevertheless in the parables we can learn what the nature of the kingdom is and what it resembles.

A

The three parables we are considering in this chapter are among the best in the Bible as to the nature of the kingdom of God. First of all the three agreed in saying that the kingdom is a dynamic thing. In all three growth is inherent. In the Parable of Spontaneous Growth, the kingdom is represented as having within itself the power for spontaneous growth. This kingdom is not realized without growth over a period of time. That is, preparation is an essential. In other words growth is unforced and cannot be pushed by hasty kingdom builders. One realizes from this parable God's place in furthering His kingdom. One realizes that men do not work alone and that the results are not due alone to their efforts. The patience of the farmer in awaiting harvest is a patience that is taught here.

Again all three parables teach that the kingdom

THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD
AS FOUND IN THE PARABLES

Chapter 1

The Parable of Spontaneous Growth, Mk. 4:26-29

The Parable of The Mustard Seed, Mk. 4:30-32; Mt. 13:31f; Lk. 13:18f

The Parable of The Leaven, Mt. 13:33; Lk. 13:20f

In Section A of this thesis, we shall examine certain of the parables that give more generally, and specifically as well as generally, the nature of the kingdom of God. Jesus never defined in so many words what he meant by this phrase he borrowed from the Inter-testamental Period and from his own time, and to which he gave his own content. Nevertheless in the parables we can learn what the nature of the kingdom is and what it resembles.

The three parables we are considering in this chapter are among the best in what they teach as to the nature of the kingdom of God. First of all the three agree in saying that the kingdom is a dynamic thing. In all three growth is inherent. In the Parable of Spontaneous Growth, the kingdom is represented as having within itself the power for spontaneous growth. This kingdom is not realized without growth over a period of time. That is, preparation is an essential. In other words growth is unforced and cannot be pushed by hasty kingdom builders. One realizes from this parable God's place in furthering His kingdom. One realizes that men do not work alone and that the results are not due alone to their efforts. The patience of the farmer in awaiting harvest is a patience that is taught here.

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Chapter I

The Parable of Spontaneous Growth, Mt. 13:24-30
 The Parable of the Mustard Seed, Mt. 13:31-32; Lk. 13:18-19
 The Parable of the Tares, Mt. 13:24-30; Lk. 13:20-21

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The three parables we are considering in this chapter are among the best in what they teach as to the nature of the kingdom of God. First of all the three agree in saying that the kingdom is a dynamic thing. In all three growth is inherent. In the Parable of Spontaneous Growth, the kingdom is represented as having within itself the power for spontaneous growth. This kingdom is not realized without growth over a period of time. That is, preparation is an essential. In other words growth is unforced and cannot be pushed by hasty kingdom building. One realizes from this parable God's place in the earth and His kingdom. One realizes that men do not work alone and that the results are not due alone to their efforts. The existence of the Father in waiting harvest is a patience that is taught here.

Again all three parables teach that the kingdom

does start from small beginnings. As the seeds and the bit of leaven are of apparent insignificance so is the kingdom of God in its beginnings. Nevertheless we should not be deceived by this modest way in which the kingdom commences. For while it does start from the small, its possibilities are immeasurable. The seed in the first parable grows to give an abundant harvest. From the mustard seed grows a tree of strength sufficient to offer protection to birds. The leaven makes its influence felt throughout the batch of dough in which it is placed. The characteristic of growth from the paltry to the great is thus another general characteristic of the kingdom of God taught in these three parables.

There are also other characteristics of the kingdom that these three parables give, but these are not common to all three parables. In one case the kingdom is represented as a visible thing; in another as an invisible power. For example, in the Parable of the Mustard Seed, the seed though tiny is the life origin of the tree, and this tree, the kingdom, is a visible support and protection to the birds. In a secondary sense it might be said that like the grown mustard tree the kingdom becomes a static material thing. On the other hand in the Parable of The Leaven, the leaven acts in the dough invisibly yet ever dynamic^{ly} until it has leavened the whole batch. In the Parable of The Mustard Seed the kingdom of God is a visible fact; in that of The Leaven, the kingdom is a hidden force, at first negligible but doing its work just as effectively and

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making for just as positive changes for good as the mustard seed does in its maturity. Both the Parable of The Leaven and the Parable of The Mustard Seed show clearly the kingdom as an expansive growth moving along orderly lines. In all three parables the kingdom of God is reflected in an optimistic light. They are parables of cheer and reveal the kingdom as a movement that fits in with life in the finest sense of the word.

There is no need to make himself judge in any ultimate sense over his fellow men. To do so would be contrary to the spirit of the kingdom of God. Judgment will follow in due time when the good will not suffer. This is the attitude the farmer takes when he finds that darnel seed has been sown in his wheat fields. He himself has planted good seed. Now it is discovered that a poisonous weed is also growing along with the wheat. The farmer's task is to root up this pernicious weed but the farmer knows the danger in doing this. He knows how easy it would be to root up the wheat by mistake, because the two look identical in the early stages of growth. Such hasty action is unnecessary for, by waiting patiently, the farmer will have the opportunity of harvesting his wheat safely and of disposing of the darnel at the same time. There are men in the kingdom of God who would root out at once members who they think are of the evil one. This parable teaches that in Jesus' conception of the kingdom of God such hasty action need not be carried out. This idea is reinforced in the Parable of

making for just as positive changes for good as the mustard seed does in the marketplace. Both the Parable of the Mustard Seed and the Parable of the Mustard Seed show clearly the kingdom as an expansive growth moving along orderly lines. In all these parables the kingdom of God is reflected in an optimistic light. They are parables of cheer and reveal the kingdom as a movement that fits in with life in the inner sense of the

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Chapter 2

The Parable of The Tares, Mt. 13:24-30

The Parable of The Dragnet, Mt. 13:47-50

In these two companion pieces we may learn further elements of the kingdom of God. In the Parable of The Tares we find Jesus "inculcating the cultivation of a certain spirit --- the spirit of wise patience; a spirit to be cherished by all men in all spheres".¹ The central truth of this parable is that one is not to make himself judge in any ultimate sense over his fellow men. To do so would be contrary to the spirit of the kingdom of God. Judgment will follow in due time when the good will not suffer. This is the attitude the farmer takes when he finds that darnel seed has been sown in his wheat fields. He himself has planted good seed. Now it is discovered that a poisonous weed is also growing along with the wheat. The impulse of the farm-hand is to root up this pernicious weed, but the farmer knows the danger in doing this. He knows how easy it would be to root up the wheat by mistake, because the two look identical in the early stages of growth. Such hasty action is unnecessary for, by waiting patiently, the farmer will have the opportunity of harvesting his wheat safely and of disposing of the darnel at the same time. There are some in the kingdom of God who would root out at once members who they think are of the evil one. This parable teaches that in Jesus' conception of the kingdom of God such hasty action need not be carried out. This idea is reenforced in the Parable of

¹Bruce, p. 54

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The Dragnet. In the kingdom of God may be found a mixture of good and bad. At some time there will be a hauling ashore of the net, and a separation of the two elements, good and bad, will follow. Between the two parables there is but this difference: in the Parable of the Dragnet, the bad cannot be separated from the good until the end; in the Parable of The Tares, it is prudent not to root up the dandel until the day of harvest. What do we learn from these parables that throws light on the nature of the kingdom? It is that the kingdom may have within its fold evil elements that have sifted in either by accident or through malicious intention on someone's part. In any case, however, there must be patience and forbearance for two reasons: first, because to act otherwise might bring injury to the innocent; second, because after all it is impossible^{at present} in the very nature of the case to remove the evil elements, so that there should be no premature attempts to do so.

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Chapter 3

The Parable of The Treasure, Mt.13:44
The Parable of The Merchant, Mt.13:45f

The primary teaching of these two splendid parables is the worth of the kingdom of God. Their approach only to teaching this differs. In the first parable the kingdom is like a treasure that is hidden. A man stumbling upon it in some way finds it and realizes its value. It is because of his joy at finding the treasure that he is ready to sell all in order to obtain it. He thinks nothing of the price that he pays for it. In this parable the gaining of the great treasure is clearly an accidental find; not so in the second parable. In the latter the merchant is seeking goodly pearls. He finds one he never knew existed and immediately he wants to possess it. He too is ready to sell all he has in order to buy and possess this valuable pearl. As the treasure and the pearl are worth all a man has, so is the possession of the kingdom worth all a man has in order for him to own it. The kingdom is worth all that a man has. It is not always sought. Sometimes it is a gift, but when a man stumbles across it, he wants then to get it. This is a characteristic of the kingdom. It can be found accidentally and by people who are not especially looking for it. In either case of accidentally stumbling upon it or of finding it while seeking it, the finder gives his attention straightway to obtaining it. Possession becomes the summum bonum, the goal.

Chapter 7

The Parable of the Treasure, Mt. 13:44
The Parable of the Merchant, Mt. 13:45

The primary meaning of these two parables is to advise us the worth of the Kingdom of God. Their purpose is to convince this nation. In the first parable the Kingdom is like a treasure that is hidden. A man stumbles upon it in some way finds it and realizes its value. It is because of his joy at finding the treasure that he is ready to sell all in order to obtain it. He realizes nothing of the price that he pays for it. In this parable the gaining of the great treasure is clearly an accidental thing; not so in the second parable. In the latter the merchant is seeking goodly pearls. He finds one he never knew existed and immediately he wants to possess it. He too is ready to sell all he has in order to buy and possess this valuable pearl. As the treasure and the pearl are worth all a man has, so is the possession of the Kingdom worth all a man has in order for him to own it. The Kingdom is worth all that a man has. It is not always sought. Sometimes it is a gift, but when a man stumbles across it, he wants then to get it. This is a characteristic of the Kingdom. It can be found accidentally and by people who are not especially looking for it. In either case of accidentally stumbling upon it or of finding it while seeking it, the finder gives his attention accordingly to obtaining it. Possession means the same to him, the goal.

The two parables also reveal an aspect different from what we observed in the Parables of The Leaven and of Spontaneous Growth. In the Parable of The Treasure and of The Merchant the kingdom is seen as something static. It is not the dynamic force we saw it to be in The Parable of The Leaven. Nevertheless we see that these apparently contradictory elements all go to make up the kingdom of God. The kingdom is both dynamic and static; visible and invisible; a gift and an achievement--- these and other elements we shall discover to be characteristic of the kingdom of God as we continue our studies.

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Chapter 4

The Children of The Bridechamber, Lk.5:33-35; Mt.9:14f; Mk.2:18-20
 The New Patch and The Old Garment, Lk.5:36; Mt.9:16; Mk.2:21
 The New Wine and The Old Wineskins, Lk.5:37f; Mt.9:17; Mk.2:22
 The Preference For Old Wine, Lk.5:39
 Treasures New and Old, Mt.13:51f.

Strictly speaking the first four parables in this chapter do not deal specifically with the kingdom of God. They are parables Jesus spoke in defending himself and his position. Nevertheless these parables, together with the Parable of Treasures New and Old, find an appropriate place in this thesis as we consider the phase of refusal that men would make to the kingdom's claims and the contempt that they would show toward the kingdom, as indicated in the attitude they did take toward Jesus himself. For after all Jesus was the kingdom of God being lived completely in the sense that he did live and practise very definitely that which he came to give men. These parables have in them an element of conflict, the conflict that results when the old and the new meet in apparent or in real contradiction. The focus of conflict in these first four parables is in Jesus and his teachings. His is the new in conflict with the old. Let us look at these parables to see wherein they reflect Jesus' attitude about the kingdom.

The Parable of The Children of The Bridechamber tells us only indirectly about the kingdom of God, of which Jesus was so much a part. The people were taking it for granted that Jesus' disciples should fast as often as John's disciples and other orthodox religious people were doing. Jesus was not demanding

or expecting such fasting. In this parable he compared his own group to a group at a marriage at which he himself was the bridegroom. This joyful group, this happy band of disciples of Jesus, were simply living in such a spirit because to Jesus that was the way members of the kingdom do live. Now why should there be conflict over this? The conflict was due simply to the people's misunderstanding ^{of} Jesus and ^{of} that for which he stood. Just as they misunderstood him, so did they fail to realize what kind of a kingdom he was telling them about. This is what we find in this parable and the others in this chapter. The attitude Jesus took toward religion, the attitude he wanted to make characteristic of the kingdom of God, was that religion is normal, healthy living in harmony with God and one's fellow men, and not a kind of life that is symbolized by constant fasting. This attitude of Jesus was not mere sentiment, for he closes the parable with a suggestion which would be more clearly understood later on, namely: that the days would come when the bridegroom would be taken away; then would the time be appropriate for fasting.

The Parables of The New Patch and The Old Garment and The New Wine and The Old Wineskins follow immediately the parable with which we have just been dealing. They enforce in further parabolic form what Jesus has been saying. Jesus employs two common household facts: the use of old cloth for patching and the use of only new skins for new wine. He points out that one never sews new cloth to an old garment or puts new

of associating with Jesus. In this parable he compared the new group to a group at a marriage at which he himself was the bridegroom. This joyful group, this happy band of disciples of Jesus, were simply living in such a spirit because of Jesus that was the way members of the kingdom do live. Now why should there be conflict over this? The conflict was due simply to the fact that the Pharisees and the Jews and the Scribes for which he spoke, Jesus, as they misunderstood him, so did they fail to realize what kind of a kingdom he was telling them about. This is what we find in this parable and the others in this chapter. The Pharisees took Jewish religion, the Scribes as wanted to make characteristics of the kingdom of God, was that religion is not really living in harmony with God and one's fellow man, and not a kind of life that is symbolized by constant fasting. This attitude of Jesus was not mere sentiment, for he chose the parable with a suggestion which would be more clearly understood later on, namely: that the day would come when the bridegroom would be taken away; then would the time be appropriate for fasting.

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wine into old skins. Like with like, the fit with the fit,--- the consistency that one observes in life he shows to be necessary also when considering his teachings in their relation to the accepted traditional teaching. It is as unsound to use his teaching to patch the traditional teaching as it is to use new cloth in patching an old garment. Like the new wine in the new skins his new teachings must find expression in new forms. He has just finished comparing his group to a group at a marriage. Such a happy, joyful crowd were very much out of place among the staid dull representatives of the traditional views of religion. These two groups could not possibly be brought together without something out of the way happening. Jesus is not condemning the old. He is merely pointing out that incongruous elements must be kept separate.

The parable germ of The Preference For Old Wine that now follows only in Luke 5:39 comes seemingly only as an after thought. Until now Jesus has supported the view that the new must not ^{be} used as patching material or put into old skins. His message has a right to its own expression and a place of its own. His new teaching of the kingdom must not be made subservient to the old. Notwithstanding in this parable I find him adding a word in appreciation of the old. As I see the situation and the background, it seems as though Jesus were uttering a warning --- a note such as we find him sounding at the end of his answer to Peter's question, "What then shall we have?" Mt.19:27. Jesus closes with the ominous words, "But many shall be last that are first; and first that are last".

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On this occasion Jesus had told his disciples what they who followed him would receive; but perhaps he saw the need of adding the thought that he did, namely that some who think they have followed him have not and will find themselves last in the kingdom, whereas others will find themselves first. Now without too insistent a use of analogy, might it not be said that in this parable germ Jesus is expressing a certain truth--- apparently contradictory to the thoughts of the previous parables--- that there is an element in the old and seasoned which is more palatable than the new? Might it not be said rather paradoxically that the Good News of the kingdom must go through a kind of aging before men will accept it? This is what I believe Jesus is saying in this verse.

This teaching concerning the process of acclimatization that Jesus suggests the kingdom must go through before men will feel perfectly at ease in it I find supported to a certain extent in the Parable of The Treasures New and Old, in which there is a beautiful consideration expressed of the way in which a man comes into the kingdom. Jesus says that a man comes into the kingdom of Heaven with both the old and the new. The old life of sin he has cast away or has moved toward overcoming it: there can be no moral dualism; but with the new there is and can be an appreciation for the old treasures. This parable might appropriately follow the Parable of The Preference For Old Wine. The old is good, but the new is not to be thrown away, for some day it will be the good, and the old will have

disappeared. Thus in this chapter we have found parables that again seem to reflect contradictory or paradoxical elements of what the kingdom of God is like. Nevertheless the kingdom is like each of these facets that we have found. It is not ^{to} be mixed with or subordinated to the old teaching, yet it is not always found palatable to all. However, it will become so after it has gone through a process that has aged and mellowed it. Within it at the same time are members who have brought a bit of the old along with the new. Strange as these things may seem, still these things do happen even as Paul realized when he said, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new", 2 Cor 5:17.

These words we have already mentioned: "But many shall be last that are first; and first that are last", Mt. 19:13. Then the next word opens the parable and connects it with what has gone before --- For. "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man that was a householder". Jesus had told Peter what he would receive, yet it is now necessary that he give a warning because of the bargaining streak which Jesus felt Peter had shown. So Jesus says, "You shall be enriched if your sacrifice is a sacrifice and not a calculation".¹ Now comes the parable. What is it saying? We read of men hired at different hours in the day all receiving the same pay at the end of the working day. If we think of this as an old-time practice, we shall miss the point. It is not that. Jesus is talking to us about the kingdom of God, and in effect he is saying that in this

¹ Matthew 23:12

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always found palatial to all. However, it will become so after
it has gone through a process that has aged and mellowed it.
Within it at the same time are members who have brought a bit
of the old along with the new. Strangers as these things may
seem, still these things do happen even as Paul stated when
he said, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old
things are passed away; behold all things are become new." 2 Cor

5:17.

Chapter 5
The Laborers In The Vineyard, Mt.20:1-16

This splendid kingdom parable has unfortunately been misunderstood by many who have wrongly seen in it a defence of the capitalistic system, because they have not understood the nature of a parable. What is the teaching concerning the kingdom of God as we find it in this parable? It is necessary in this case to know the background thoroughly. Jesus had said how hard it was for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. In wonder and with impulsive curiosity, Peter asked Jesus what his friends and he would get out of having given up all to follow him. Jesus told Peter what they would receive, but he ended with those words we have already mentioned: "But many shall be last that are first; and first that are last", Mt.19:30. Then the next word opens the parable and connects it with what has gone before ---For. "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man that was a householder". Jesus had told Peter what he would receive, yet it is now necessary that he give a warning because of the bargaining streak which Jesus felt Peter had shown. So spoke Jesus, "You shall be enthroned if your sacrifice is a sacrifice and not a calculation".¹ Now comes the parable. What do we find it saying? We read of men hired at different hours in the day all receiving the same pay at the end of the working day. If we think of this as an economic treatise, we shall miss the point. It is not that. Jesus is talking to me about the kingdom of God, and in effect he is saying that in this

¹Buttrick, p.160

Chapter 2

The Parable in The Kingdom, Mt. 13:1-13

This splendid kingdom parable has unfortunately been misunderstood by many who have wrongly seen in it a balance of the capitalist system, because they have not understood the nature of a parable. What is the meaning concerning the Kingdom of God as we find it in this parable? It is necessary in this case to know the background thoroughly. Jesus had said how hard it was for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. In wonder and with investigative curiosity, Peter asked Jesus what his friends and he would get out of having given up all to follow him. Jesus told Peter that they would receive, but he ended with those words we have already mentioned: "But many shall be last that are first; and first that are last", Mt. 13:12. Then the next word opens the parable and connects it with what has gone before --- For. "For the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man that was a householder". Jesus had told Peter what he would receive, yet it is now necessary that he give a warning because of the startling break which Jesus told Peter had shown. So spoke Jesus, "You shall be enthroned in your assembly as a sacrifice and not a celebration".¹ Now comes the parable. What do we find it saying? We read of men hired at different hours in the day all receiving the same pay at the end of the working day. It is this that as an economic treatise, we shall miss the point. It is not that. Jesus is talking to us about the Kingdom of God, and in effect he is saying that in this

¹ Matthew 23:13

kingdom there is a different standard from that found in industry and in human relations. God has a different standard of making payment. What Jesus is desiring to bring out is that it is sometimes paradoxically true that a man renders in a week as much as some do in fifty years. God's reward is not like man's. The reward of love is not a matter of bookkeeping. Altruism does not reward as scales do.²

This parable teaches clearly that in the kingdom of God men are rewarded differently; the kingdom is not a kingdom of complete equality; nevertheless this does not mean to compromise God's character. It is rather that God sees deeper and rewards the children of His kingdom on a different basis from the way men measure themselves. The kingdom of God is both gift and achievement; but here it is not achieved by the mere process of putting in time as it were. Neither are rewards made in a purely arbitrary manner. God's standards in dealing with men in His kingdom are simply His own. We may not comprehend them always yet they suggest a deeper insight and finer discrimination than we laborers are able to realize.

²Class Notes, Bk. 2, p. 74

kingdom there is a different standard from that found in human
 life and in human relations. God has a different standard of
 reward. What Jesus is desiring to bring out is that it
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 dealing with men in His kingdom are singly His own. We may not
 comprehend them always yet they suggest a deeper insight and
 finer discrimination than we are able to realize.

Jesus, Luke 14:15

Chapter 9

The Parable of the Uncompleted Tower, Lk. 14:28-30
The Parable of The King's Rack Warriors, Lk. 14:31-33

In this section the parables that we shall consider reveal the characteristics of the citizens of the kingdom of God. The two parables in this chapter do not explicitly deal with the kingdom except as we have the kingdom shown in Jesus and those who follow him. There is implicit in Jesus' teaching the idea that those who follow him are of the kingdom and compose the kingdom about which he is preaching. Hence we say that in these parables there is the reflection of the most of discipleship in the kingdom of God, because Jesus is putting

B

MARKS OF THE CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

AS SEEN IN THE PARABLES

loyalty, there we find the kingdom being lived. These parables teach very definitely that following Jesus requires clear thought and deliberation of the soul, just as one would be before beginning to build a tower, and just as a king with a small army would consider whether he could defeat a king whose army was twice as large as his. For Jesus' kingdom demands one's whole undivided loyalty. One cannot say that he is ready to give his all to Jesus is not ready for the kingdom. As a man building a tower has first considered whether he can completely finish it, so must he who would be a candidate for Jesus' kingdom consider whether he can go the second mile, drink the cup poured out for him, wear the cross that may be his, or, harder yet, be killed to die in one way or other. These conditions may be

MARKS OF THE CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

AS GIVEN IN THE PARABLES

Chapter 6

The Parable of The Uncompleted Tower, Lk.14:25-30

The Parable of The King's Rash Warfare, Lk.14:31-33

In this section the parables that we shall consider reveal the characteristics of the citizens of the kingdom of God. The two parables in this chapter do not explicitly deal with the kingdom except as we have the kingdom shown in Jesus and those who follow him. There is implicit in Jesus' teaching the idea that those who follow him are of the kingdom and compose the kingdom about which he is preaching. Hence we may say that in these parables there is the reflection of the cost of discipleship in the kingdom of God, because Jesus is putting up to the multitudes what it means to follow him. For loyalty to Jesus means loyalty to the kingdom, and where we find this loyalty, there we find the kingdom being lived. These parables teach very definitely that following Jesus requires clear thought and deliberation of the cost, just as one would do before beginning to build a tower, and just as a king with a small army would consider whether he could defeat a king whose army was twice as large as his. For Jesus' kingdom demands one's whole undivided loyalty. Who cannot say that he is ready to give his all to Jesus is not ready for the kingdom. As a man building a tower has first considered whether he can completely finish it, so must he who would be a candidate for Jesus' kingdom contemplate whether he can go the second mile, drink the cup poured for him, bear the cross that may be his, or, harder yet, be nailed to one in some way or other. These conditions may be

Chapter

The Parable of The Unrepentant Son, Lk. 15:11-32
The Parable of The King's Feast, Lk. 14:15-24

In this section the parables that we shall consider

reveal the characteristics of the citizens of the kingdom of God. The two parables in this chapter do not explicitly deal with the kingdom except as we have the kingdom shown in Jesus and those who follow him. There is implicit in Jesus' teaching the idea that those who follow him are of the kingdom and compose the kingdom about which he is preaching. Hence we may say that in these parables there is the reflection of the cost of discipleship in the kingdom of God, because Jesus is calling us to the attitudes which it seems to follow him. For loyalty to Jesus means loyalty to the kingdom, and where is that kingdom? Jesus we find the kingdom being lived. These parables teach very definitely that following Jesus requires a certain and deliberate of the cost, just as one would do before beginning to build a tower, and just as a king with a small army would consider whether he could defeat a king whose army was twice as large as his. For Jesus' kingdom demands one's whole undivided loyalty. Who cannot say that he is ready to give his all to Jesus is not ready for the kingdom. As a man building a tower that first considered whether he can completely finish it, so must he who would be a candidate for Jesus' kingdom consider whether he can go the second mile, drink the cup poured for him, bear the cross that say be his, or, harder yet, be called to one in some way or other. These conditions may be

one's lot in the kingdom. Accordingly the disciple must be ready to fulfill these conditions if they become a part of what is expected of him. Such thought and reflection he who is a candidate for the kingdom under Jesus must give if he is not to act foolishly.

The Parable of The Sower and The Publican, Lk. 13:9-13. Humility is a characteristic that has a large and very important place within the kingdom of God. The parables of The Sower and The Pharisee and The Publican case along with giving us this characteristic although these parables were spoken to test specific situations not explicitly on the kingdom. These parables were both spoken to illustrate an attitude that Jesus observed in men, namely, self-assertion. This attitude is contrasted with a characteristic that is just opposite to this worldly manner, and which is typical of the citizens of the kingdom. There is this difference between The Sower Parable and most parables: "that it tells us not how men do act in the natural sphere, but how according to the dictates of goodness they should act".¹ The Jesus' purpose in this parable is not to lay down clever advice on how one may more dramatically attain his ends. He knows well enough that the world generally takes a man at his own estimate. The point that Jesus makes is by implication that there is a society--the kingdom of God, where humility is the good; where pride and ambition have no place; and where true worth is given its proper recognition. To such a society God's people belong. It is to this kingdom that he is introducing his followers.

The Parable of The Pharisee and The Publican,

¹ Bruce, p. 313.

one's job in the kitchen. Accordingly the discipline must be
 every to fulfill these conditions it they become a part of what
 is expected of him. Even though the reflection he who is a
 satisfied for the kitchen what less than five in the day
 to get together.

Chapter 7

The Parable of The Chief Seats, Lk. 14:7-11

The Parable of The Pharisee and The Publican, Lk. 18:9-14

Humility is a characteristic that has a large and very fundamental place within the kingdom of God. The parables of The Chief Seats and The Pharisee and The Publican come closest to giving us this characteristic although these parables were spoken to meet specific situations not explicitly on the kingdom. These parables were both spoken to illustrate an attitude that Jesus observed in men, namely, self-assertion. This attitude he contrasted with a characteristic that is just opposite to this worldly manner, and which is typical of the citizens of the kingdom. There is this difference between The Chief Seats-parable and most parables: "that it tells us not how men do act in the natural sphere, but how according to the dictates of prudence they should act".¹ Yet Jesus' purpose in this parable is not to lay down clever advice on how one may more dramatically attain his ends. He knows well enough that the world generally takes a man at his own estimate. The point that Jesus makes is by implication that there is a society---the kingdom of God, where humility is the good; where pride and ambition have no place; and where true worth is given its proper recognition. To such a society does Jesus belong. It is to this kingdom that he is introducing his followers.

The Parable of The Pharisee and The Publican,

¹Bruce, p. 310.

Chapter 7

The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant, Mt. 18:23-35
The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant, Mt. 18:23-35

Humility is a characteristic that has a large and
very fundamental place within the Kingdom of God. The parables
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merciful Servant and the Unmerciful Servant: "that is, he not only
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of God, where humility is the good; where pride and ambition
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nition. To such a society Josephus belongs. It is this
Kingdom that he is introducing his followers.
The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant and the Unmerciful

which is a companion piece in a certain way to the Parable of The Chief Seats, makes a similar point. It was spoken "unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous", Luke 18:9. Jesus does not explicitly say that this is a lesson on the kingdom. Nevertheless I feel that in the contrast set up in the parable there is given an attitude that is found characteristic of the citizens of the kingdom of God. In this parable of the two men in the Temple, Jesus points out what God thinks of the two types of men, not what they think that God thinks of them. Of the two, the publican was the one who stood nearer the approval of God. Both desired God's good will, but their attitude and way of seeking it were poles apart. In the kingdom of God the citizen is like the man who takes an inconspicuous seat; in this kingdom the citizen prays like the publican who stood afar off. Nevertheless in this kingdom the man of worth and humility does not remain in the low seat, for in the kingdom of God real worth is recognized according to God's standards. Also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts".

There is also the element of judgment in this parable. Failing to forgive our fellow men, we come under the penalty of being refused forgiveness by God, of exclusion from his kingdom. At the same time judgment here, as seen also in other parables, is not rendered arbitrarily on God's part. Actually we render our own judgment by the attitude that we take toward the kingdom of God as Jesus has revealed it to us. It

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of worth and humility does not remain in the low seat, for in
the Kingdom of God real worth is recognized according to God's
standards.

Chapter 8

The Parable of The Unmerciful Servant, Mt.18:21-35

This parable deals explicitly with the quality and characteristic of forgiveness in the kingdom of God. It was told in answer to Peter's question, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times?", Mt.18:21. Jesus' answer took the question out of the realm of arithmetic. There is no limit in forgiving a penitent person. Then having said this Jesus illustrated with the story of the merciless servant. This servant owed a sum of money which was also out of the realm of figures practically speaking. The man could never have paid such a debt. The exacting king, moved with compassion, became a forgiving creditor. Still this gracious gesture was lost on the servant, for as soon as he met a debtor of his own, he seized him and cast him into prison when the man was unable to pay. When the king heard this, he treated the unmerciful servant as that man had treated his debtor. "So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts".

There is also the element of judgment in this parable. Failing to forgive our fellow men, we come under the penalty of being refused forgiveness by God, or exclusion from his kingdom. At the same time judgment here, as seen also in other parables, is not rendered arbitrarily on God's part. Actually we render our own judgment by the attitude that we take toward the kingdom of God as Jesus has revealed it to us. It

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This parable deals exclusively with the quality and characteristic of forgiveness in the kingdom of God. It was told in answer to Peter's question, "Lord, how oft shall I forgive sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times?" (Mt. 18:21). Jesus' answer took the question out of the realm of arithmetic. There is no limit to forgiving a penitent person. Then having said this Jesus illustrated with the story of the merciless servant. This servant owed a sum of money which was also out of the realm of figures practically speaking. The man could never have paid such a debt. The exacting king, moved with compassion, became a forgiving creditor. Still this gracious gesture was lost on the servant, for as soon as he was a debtor of his own, he seized him and sent him into prison where the man was unable to pay. When the king heard this, he transposed the unmerciful servant as that man had treated his debtor. "So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts."

There is also the element of judgment in this parable. Failing to forgive our fellow men, we come under the penalty of being refused forgiveness by God, or exclusion from His kingdom. At the same time judgment here, as seen also in other parables, is not rendered arbitrarily on God's part. Usually we render our own judgment by the attitude that we take toward the kingdom of God as Jesus has revealed it to us. It

is for us to say whether we accept its conditions and qualifications. Doing so we find we are in and of it and may expect forgiveness if we continue to manifest this characteristic of the kingdom. When we do not want to be in the kingdom, as is evidenced by our refusal to be forgiving in nature, we actually render judgment against ourselves so far as being made a member of the kingdom of God is concerned. The debt of a hundred shillings in the parable amounted to almost nothing; the debt of ten thousand talents was a debt that could never have been paid. The king freely cancelled the debt and forgave the man outright. In the same way do all of us in the kingdom stand toward God: the debt to Him we can never pay, yet we have but to ask in His name and it will be forgiven outright. In the same way should we behave times without number toward our fellow men who owe us a paltry sum and who seek for extension of time. If we would act in the spirit characteristic of members of the kingdom of God, we shall ever have the spirit of forgiveness to cultivate toward our fellow men. Such is the teaching of this parable concerning the kingdom of God.

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C

STUMBLING BLOCKS TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD

or

THE ELEMENT OF JUDGMENT

AS SEEN IN THE PARABLES

STUNNED BY THE WISDOM OF GOD

OF

THE ELEMENT OF JUDGMENT

AS SEEN IN THE PARABLES

Chapter 9

The Parable of The Two Sons, Mt.21:28-32.

In this section we are dealing with a phase of the kingdom similar to that considered in the second section, except that here we are dealing with the characteristics that keep men from the kingdom and with the marks of aliens in the kingdom of God. It is the element of judgment that is being generally considered, although the characteristic of judgment as seen in the kingdom of God is not the same as we find it in the world.

The Parable of The Two Sons was spoken against the chief priests and the elders in one of Jesus' conflicts with them during Passion Week. Jesus told it to illustrate why the publicans and the harlots were going into the kingdom of God ahead of the religious leaders themselves. In effect Jesus said that outcast, degraded people of society were entering the kingdom of God ahead of the so-called orthodox religiously because of their change of attitude in obedience to God. The Pharisees and their neighbors were rendering lip service only. They were not obeying the weightier matters of God's law. This vice of insincerity and of hypocrisy--- so foreign to kingdom membership---which Jesus points out in the parable follows very aptly the situation in which the hypocrisy of the Pharisees is seen. They had refused to answer Jesus' question concerning John's baptism. It was more convenient for them to remain silent. These vices were utterly unnatural to Jesus. They were

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In this section we are dealing with a phase of the kingdom similar to that considered in the second section, except that here we are dealing with the characteristics that keep men from the kingdom and with the marks of righteousness in the kingdom of God. It is the element of judgment that is being generally considered, although the characteristics of judgment as seen in the kingdom of God is not the same as we find it in the world.

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chief priests and the elders in one of Jesus' parables which came during Passion Week. Jesus told it to illustrate why the Pharisees and the scribes were going into the kingdom of God ahead of the religious leaders themselves. In effect Jesus said that outward, outward people of society were entering the kingdom of God ahead of the so-called orthodox religious people of their change of attitude in obedience to God. The Pharisees and their neighbors were rendering the service only. They were not obeying the weightier matters of God's law. This view of inferiority and of hypocrisy--as foreign to kingdom membership--which Jesus pointed out in the parable follows very aptly the situation in which the hypocrisy of the Pharisees is seen. They had refused to answer Jesus' question concerning John's baptism. It was more convenient for them to remain silent. These views were deeply ingrained in Jesus. They are

not characteristics of the kingdom. Like the second son, the Pharisees wished to have credit for a willingness to do their work without actually laying their hands to the task. The first son found a welcome in the kingdom. He was closer to the kingdom because his repentance and attitude of meekness was stronger than the impetuous attitude he had shown toward his father when the latter had asked him to work. Judgment in this parable was really imposed by the sons themselves. In the kingdom of God one is not arbitrarily forbidden admittance by a gate-keeper. It is the attitude that one takes toward it that determines whether one is within it or not.

We cannot say that either of the two sons, or the two groups, was acting entirely in the right way or in the wrong way. We cannot defend the refusal of the first son to work. We can not commend the other for refusing to work after saying he would^{work}. Still we commend the former for his change of mind. The latter stands condemned by himself for not doing the will of his father. The essential point is the way the two ultimately acted, not what they said. This is what we may learn in this parable concerning the kingdom of God and whether we shall find ourselves barred from it. It is not that God will judge a man unworthy to enter the kingdom. We ourselves by our insincerity, hardness of heart, hypocrisy are our own judges, and to continue to have such deep-seated traits is to debar us from the kingdom. On the other hand, having an attitude of penitence, being sorry for our hastiness and doing

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gesture. It is the attitude that one takes toward it that determines whether one is within it or not.

We cannot say that either of the two sons, of the two groups, was acting entirely in the right way or in the wrong way. We cannot detect the refusal of the first son to work. We can not command the other for refusing to work after asking him to. Still we command the former for his change of mind. The latter stands condemned by himself for not doing the will of his father. The essential point is the way the two mis-
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Chapter 10
 what we can to correct our refusals to do our father's will, we shall find a way into the kingdom of God.

While these two parables tell us why the kingdom is taken from the leaders of Israel, they are expressly parables that center about Jesus himself. Because the religious leaders have not listened to the prophets and to Jesus, they have excluded themselves from the kingdom of God. Judgment comes upon them as Jesus says in the second parable, "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof", Mt. 21:43. In both parables Jesus stands as representing the kingdom of God. The attitude men take toward him is the same attitude they take toward the kingdom of God. Let us look at the Parable of The Wicked Servants and see what specific teaching we can gain concerning the kingdom.

Quite clearly it seems that in this parable the standard test is the test by which a man stands or falls in relation to the kingdom. In the parable those in whom the vineyard had been entrusted have abused the privileges and have not rendered what was just due to their lord. Therefore the vineyard must be turned over to more worthy servants. Similarly, then, we may say that in the kingdom of God men hold their places by virtue of their bringing forth fruits worthy of their task. If they do not they must expect to lose their places. Faithfulness to one's stewardship and unselfishness of service are qualities essential in any kingdom that is to endure. Then men show un-

what we can do correct our mistakes in the future, we
shall find a way into the kingdom of God.

Chapter 10

The Cruel Vine-dressers, Mt. 21:33-41; Mk. 12:1-9; Lk. 20:9-16
 The Rejected Cornerstone, Mt. 21:42-45, Mk. 12:10f; Lk. 20:17f.

While these two parables tell us why the kingdom is taken from the leaders of Israel, they are expressly parables that center about Jesus himself. Because the religious leaders have not listened to the prophets and to Jesus, they have excluded themselves from the kingdom of God. Judgment comes upon them, as Jesus says in the second parable, "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof", Mt. 21:43. In both parables Jesus stands as representing the kingdom of God. The attitude men take toward him is the same attitude they take toward the kingdom of God. Let us look at the Parable of The Wicked Husbandmen and see what specific teaching we can gain concerning the kingdom.

Quite plainly it seems that in this parable the orchard test is the test by which a man stands or falls in relation to the kingdom. In the parable those to whom the vineyard had been entrusted have abused the privileges and have not rendered their just dues unto their lord. Therefore the vineyard must be turned over to more worthy stewards. Similarly, then, we may say that in the kingdom of God men hold their places by virtue of their bringing forth fruits worthy of their task. If they do not they must expect to lose their places. Faithfulness to one's stewardship and unselfishness of service are qualities essential in any kingdom that is to endure. When men show un-

Chapter 10

The Great Vine-dressers, Mt. 21:33-45; Mk. 12:1-9; Lk. 20:9-16
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virtue of their bringing forth fruits worthy of their task. If

they do not they must expect to lose their places. Faithfulness
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essential in any kingdom that is to endure. When men show un-

faithfulness, selfishness, and abuse of their position, they will not long continue to hold their offices, but must forfeit them to others; "bringing forth the fruits thereof".

Immediately following the Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen comes the Parable of The Rejected Stone, which can not be separated from what has just been said. Jesus makes the application that is inherent in the answer of the listeners, (v.41). Quoting from Psalm 118:22f, Jesus makes the application that as Israel has failed to live up to the opportunity given her, she will lose her place and it will pass to another. Israel has lost her place in rejecting Jesus and what he stood for--- the kingdom of God. The rejection of Jesus has but shown Israel's rejection. Jesus has applied the passage to himself, it is true, but in the sense that he and the truth and the kingdom of God are one. So shall it be that he who opposes the truth and the coming of the kingdom of God shall be severely injured in some way or form or other; but he whom the truth runs into shall be completely destroyed. This is true not because Jesus said it but simply because Jesus was expressing a universal fact: that one cannot live contrary to physical, moral, and spiritual laws and survive in the long run. Those who can not live as true members of the kingdom will lose the right of the leadership they have been holding. Such are the teachings of these parables on the kingdom of God.

richness, wealth, and abundance of their position, they will not long continue to hold their offices, and must forfeit them to others "bringing forth the fruits thereof".

Immediately following the Parable of the Wicked

Householders comes the Parable of the Rejected Stone, which can not be separated from what has just been said. Jesus makes the

application that is inherent in the answer of the Pharisees.

(v. 11). Quoting from Psalm 118:22, Jesus makes the applica-

tion that as Israel has failed to live up to the opportunity given her, she will lose her place and it will pass to another. Israel has lost her place in rejecting Jesus and what he stood

for--the Kingdom of God. The rejection of Jesus has cut

short Israel's rejection. Jesus has applied the passage to him-

self, it is true, but in the sense that he and the truth and

the Kingdom of God are one. So shall it be that he who opposes

the truth and the coming of the Kingdom of God shall be severe-

ly injured in some way or form or other; but he whom the truth

runs into shall be completely destroyed. This is true not be-

cause Jesus said it but simply because Jesus was expressing a

universal fact: that one cannot live contrary to physical, moral

and spiritual laws and survive in the long run. Those who can

not live as true members of the Kingdom will lose the right of

the leadership they have been holding. Such are the teachings

of these parables on the Kingdom of God.

Chapter 11

The Parable of The Slighted Marriage Feast,
or The Great Supper, Mt.22:1-14; Lk.14:15-24.

This kingdom parable has two versions, that found in Matthew and the second found in Luke. The two versions have the same theme in essence, but were spoken to meet different circumstances. We shall consider this to be the case, considering, however, the contribution each makes to our study of the kingdom of God. Let us look at Matthew's version first. This version is one of the parables that Jesus uttered in his conflict with the religious leaders, those who have been supposedly in the kingdom as it was understood before Jesus came. However, this invitation to the kingdom has lost its appeal, and those who have been invited make light of it. On the other hand the invitation does appeal to the people in the street. These people as they are invited and sought crowd into the kingdom. The kingdom of heaven is a place of welcome to this latter group. They accept the invitation joyfully, unsophisticated as they are. Not all do so nevertheless. Many there are who are called but not chosen because they have considered themselves above it. There is also the individual, like the improperly dressed man at the wedding, who thinks the kingdom has no standards and who finds himself rejected in the same vigorous way as was the uninvited guest. Very plainly can it be seen that if the religious leaders are cast out as unworthy of the kingdom because of their refusal to change their attitude and repent of their sins, the same judgment will fall on others who

Chapter II

The Parable of the Sifted Wheat
or The Great Supper, Mt. 22:1-14; Lk. 14:15-24.

This kingdom parable has two versions, that found in Matthew and the second found in Luke. The two versions have the same theme in essence, but were spoken to meet different circumstances. We shall consider this to be the case, considering, however, the conclusion each makes to our study of the Kingdom of God. Let us look at Matthew's version first. This version is one of the parables that Jesus uttered in his conflict with the religious leaders, those who have been engaged in the kingdom as it was understood before Jesus came. However, this invitation to the kingdom has lost its appeal, and those who have been invited take flight of it. On the other hand the invitation does appeal to the people in the street. These people as they are invited and sought crowd into the kingdom. The kingdom of heaven is a place of welcome to this latter group. They accept the invitation joyfully, unhesitatingly as they are. Not all do so nevertheless. Many there are who are called but not chosen because they have considered themselves above it. There is also the individual, like the improperly dressed man at the wedding, who takes the kingdom too lightly and who finds himself rejected in the same vigorous way as was the uninvited guest. Very plainly can it be seen that if the religious leaders are good and as unworthy of the kingdom because of their refusal to change their attitude and regard of their aims, the same judgment will fall on others who

think that there are no conditions of entrance into the kingdom of God. In the first two sections we studied the nature of the kingdom of God and the characteristics of its members. In this section we see why people find themselves refused admittance or classed as aliens in the kingdom of God. In every parable that we study in this section we shall see that the kingdom is denied men not because they were not desired but because either they are not ready to meet the requirements of the kingdom, or else do not want to enter it.

This latter fact is clearly seen in the parables we are studying in this chapter. The version as rendered in Luke brings out explicitly that many do not want the kingdom. This answer Jesus made to the sentimental pious reflection of the dinner guest who said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God", Lk.14:15. Jesus responded with this clear-cutting version of the parable. People will act as though they wanted to be known as good, as religious, as orthodox members of the church or synagogue. They will make sufficient pretense to give people this surface view, yet actually they do not want to be members of the kingdom of God. They prefer the life they are living to the kingdom which is likened unto a marriage feast.

account of a wedding to which the bridegroom came late. The lateness of the hour is strange to us, but we must realize that night in tropical and semi-tropical lands is often the finest part of the whole day, especially in the dry season.

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Chapter 12

The Parable of The Ten Virgins, Mt.25:1-13

This parable in which the kingdom of heaven is likened unto ten virgins was probably spoken during Passion Week. If we may accept the background as given in Matthew, Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives talking to his disciples about the general theme of the coming of his kingdom. His disciples, of course, are interested in knowing details as to the time of the kingdom's coming, but Jesus is interested primarily in preparing his followers to live in the present with a fortitude and an endurance of spirit that will carry them to the end of their tasks. Readiness, preparedness at all times --- this is what he is teaching them specifically as candidates for the kingdom. Jesus does not date the coming of his kingdom. Indeed in categorical terms he denies all knowledge of this, Mt.24:36.

What he says in the Parable of The Ten Virgins about preparedness for the coming of the kingdom he has been stressing again and again in conversation with the disciples on the Mount. He leads up from the illustration of faithful and unfaithful servants to give the parable we deal with in this chapter. The narrative itself, so difficult for us westerners to understand, is far from being improbable. It is an Oriental account of a wedding to which the bridegroom came late. The lateness of the hour is strange to us, but we must realize that night in tropical and semi-tropical lands is often the finest part of the whole day, especially in the dry season.

Chapter 12

The Parable of the Ten Virgins, Mt. 25:1-13

This parable in which the kingdom of heaven is

likened unto ten virgins was probably spoken during Jesus's

teach. It is very easy to see the background as given in Matthew, 24-

and is fitting on the Mount of Olives talking to his disciples

about the general theme of the coming of his kingdom. His dis-

ciples, of course, are interested in knowing details as to the

time of the kingdom's coming, but Jesus is interested primarily

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to understand, is far from being impossible. It is an Oriental

account of a wedding to which the bridegroom came late. The

importance of the hour is strange to us, but we must realize that

night in tropical and semi-tropical lands is often the finest

part of the whole day, especially in the dry season.

To see in this parable only a lesson of a second coming would be to limit unreasonably the scope of this splendid story of Jesus. Its original purpose may have been to point out the need for preparedness for a Second Advent, but the truth imbedded in this goes deeper than that. The big thing is simply that men and women in the kingdom of God need ever be ready for whatever crisis or test may come to them sometime, for it is primarily in crises that one is proved. Until then we are all apparently alike; but unless we are prepared we shall not all fare well. Hubbard and Buttrick both use the quotation, "No man has any more religion than he can command in an emergency".¹ The emergency comes, finding some bewildered and lost, others calm enough to go through the storm essentially unshaken. We should be like the five wise virgins. Their preparedness is a characteristic of the kingdom. To be like the foolish virgins is to be unfit for the kingdom. We are excluded not at the arbitrary will of a judge. We exclude ourselves. What this parable tells us explicitly about the kingdom of God is that all may expect a crisis that will shake all to the very roots of their lives. Unless they are like the wise virgins they will not survive the crisis. Within the kingdom may be found alien members. The five foolish virgins were in; but like the many called, they were not chosen.

¹ Ibid, pp. 170, & 238, respectively

To see in this parable only a lesson of a second coming would be to limit unnecessarily the scope of this eschatological story of Jesus. Its original purpose may have been to point out the need for preparedness for a Second Advent, but the story is needed in this case deeper than that. The big thing is simply that men and women in the kingdom of God need even be ready for whatever crisis or test may come to them sometime, for it is primarily in crises that one is proved. Until then we are all apparently alike; but unless we are prepared we shall not all fare well. Hubbard and Eutrick both use the quotation, "No man has any more religion than he can command in an emergency."¹ The emergency comes, finding some bewildered and lost, others calm enough to go through the storm essentially unharmed. We should be like the five wise virgins. Their preparedness is a characteristic of the kingdom. To be like the foolish virgins is to be unfit for the kingdom. We are excluded not at the party will or a judge. We exclude ourselves. What this parable tells us explicitly about the kingdom of God is that all may expect a crisis that will shake all to the very roots of their lives. Unless they are like the wise virgins they will not survive the crisis. Within the kingdom may be found alien members. The five foolish virgins were in; but like the many called, they were not chosen.

¹ Ibid., pp. 170, & 250, respectively.

Chapter 13

The Parable of The Talents, Mt. 25:14-30; Lk. 19:11-27

The Parable of The Talents is probably another version of the Parable of The Pounds. Both have the same theme just as we found the Parables of The Great Supper and The Slighted Marriage Feast were two versions of one theme. In the case of The Talents-parable and The Pounds-parable Jesus was teaching the demands of the kingdom. In Matthew the parable was apparently delivered during Passion Week as one of those strong utterances of Jesus in which he was teaching his disciples what sort of patience and watchfulness the kingdom demanded. In Luke he told it "because they supposed that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear", 19:11.

The theme in both versions revolves about the unfaithful servant. It is he who has not done the right thing, the normal thing. He has not tried at all to make any use of the talent entrusted to him, not even to putting it to the bankers. Such an attitude is not found in the kingdom. The first servant measured up to his lord's opinion of him. He produced five talents in one version, ten in the other, and was accordingly promoted. Likewise the man with two talents showed his capacity to gain other two talents. He too received due reward. The third man came and in his own eyes as well as in the eyes of his lord stood condemned. He too received what was due him --- rebuke and loss of the little he had. In the kingdom of God every one must produce according to his talent or talents.

The Parable of the Talents, Mt. 25:14-30; Lk. 19:11-27

The Parable of the Talents is probably another

version of the Parable of the Pounds. Both have the same theme just as we found the Parables of the Great Supper and the Blind Men and Marriage Feast were two versions of one theme. In the case of the Talents-Parable and the Pounds-Parable Jesus was teaching the demands of the kingdom. In Matthew the parable was

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God every one must produce according to his talent or talents.

One's poverty or talents does not excuse him from the use of whatever little he has. This is the great fact that is brought out. The one most likely to fail to use his talents is the small man. Of him, and he represents the great majority of us, the kingdom requires proportionately as much as of the more talented members. Strictly speaking it could be maintained from

one point of view. Loss of the one talent and pound is the penalty for failure to use it. This is another phase true in life as Jesus points out. In the parable the lord arbitrarily took the talent away from the man; but this is simply to illustrate the truth that as the lord did so does life to one. What is not used must be given up. The kingdom demands for the price of future usefulness the present use of whatever talents are entrusted to us. Furthermore, there will be plenty of time for one to use his talent for there is no immediate coming of the kingdom in its finality and completion. Such are the teachings in these parables on the kingdom of God.

be judged according to the needs we have helped to answer while moving about among our fellow men. This will be the test, and we shall enter the kingdom or not according to the conduct we have shown toward our neighbors. True verse 34, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world", we might gather that there is a future element to the kingdom as well as a present element, as we have seen in the usual parable. The parables of this section have more of the future element, however.

One's poverty or talents does not exclude him from the use of whatever little he has. This is the great fact that is brought out. The one most likely to fail to use his talents is the small man. Of him, and he represents the great majority of us, the kingdom requires proportionately as much as of the more talented members.

Loss of the one talent and pound is the penalty for failure to use it. This is another phase true in life as Jesus points out. In the parable the lord explicitly took the talent away from the man; but this is simply to illustrate the truth that as the lord did so does life to one. What is not used must be given up. The kingdom demands for the office of talents requires the present use of whatever talents are entrusted to us. Furthermore, there will be plenty of time for one to use his talent for there is no immediate coming of the kingdom in its finality and completion. Such are the teachings in these parables on the kingdom of God.

Chapter 14

The Parable of The Last Judgment, Mt.25:31-46

This parable follows immediately after the Parable of The Talents, as though it were a fitting ending to the parables that Jesus has been delivering to his disciples on the Mount of Olives. Strictly speaking it could be maintained from one point of view that this story is not a parable, yet it does come under that classification in our consideration of the literature of the Gospels and has a place here in telling us what the basis of judgment will be in the kingdom.

The great lesson of this parable is not that there will be a final judgment. This is only the background. The important thought is what the basis of judgment is, namely, the law of charity, the response we have made to our needy fellow men. We shall not be judged according to the way we have worshiped, or according to how much we have put into the treasury of the Temple or Church. Rather we shall be judged according to the needs we have helped to answer while moving about among our fellow men. This will be the test, and we shall enter the kingdom or not according to the conduct we have shown toward our neighbors. From verse 34, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world", we might gather that there is a future element to the kingdom as well as a present element, as we have seen in the usual parable. The parables of this section have more of the future element, however.

Chapter 14

The Parable of the Lost Sheep, Mt. 18:12-14

This parable follows immediately after the Parable

of the Talents, as though it were a fitting ending to the p-

arable that Jesus has been delivering to his disciples on the

Mount of Olives. Strictly speaking it could be explained from

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of the Temple or Church. Rather we shall be judged according

to the needs we have helped to answer while moving about among

our fellow men. This will be the test, and we shall enter the

Kingdom or not according to the conduct we have shown toward

our neighbors. From verses 14, "Come, ye blessed of my Father,

inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the

world," we might rather that there is a future element to the

Kingdom as well as a present element, as we have seen in the

usual parable. The parables of this section have more of the

future element, however.

Also in this splendid word picture Jesus has made himself the head, the king. If, however, he is the Messiah in the kingdom, we know that it ^{is} the kind of a Messiah that God would have him be. The emphasis at this point is nevertheless the fact that Jesus associates himself with the common needy people, the least of the brethren. "The attitude that men take toward these needy people is the same they take toward me", says Jesus. The test he gives to distinguish goats and sheep is the orchard test--- of fruits produced, and of deeds done. This is the fundamental truth the parable gives us concerning judgment in the kingdom of God.

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 This is the fundamental truth the parable gives us concerning
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Chapter 15

Summary of Jesus' Teachings of the Kingdom of God in the Parables

The first division of our study of Jesus' Teachings of the kingdom of God in the parables dealt with the nature of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God apparently has paradoxical aspects, but these simply bear out what we have seen in our study, namely, that the kingdom is too great a thing to be confined within a definition. The kingdom is dynamic; it is also static. It is visible and material; it is also invisible and works silently, quietly, and unobtrusively yet effectively. The kingdom is very plainly a growth. At first it appears insignificant. Nevertheless this is not the time to pass opinion on it, for after the lapse of time, another situation will be seen. Then it is of such concrete nature that it is a bulwark of support to those who are of it. At the same time there may be within the kingdom indistinguishable alien elements of such a kind that there must be displayed toward the presence of these alien objects the qualities of patience and forbearance. For the present, these foreign particles cannot be removed.

What is the price of gaining the kingdom of God? Again we find a paradox. The kingdom is both a gift and an achievement, but in either case it is worth all that a man can pay in order to gain its possession once he has come across it. This kingdom is of immeasurable worth and value. Finally in this division of our subject, we found that within the kingdom are elements old and new, each having a place, yet not being

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Summary of Jesus' Teaching of the Kingdom of God in the Parables

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This Kingdom is of immeasurable worth and value. Finally in

this division of our subject, we found that within the Kingdom

are elements old and new, each having a place, yet not being

mixed any more than in the natural realm one puts new wine in-
to old skins. The kingdom also has a very different standard
of reward from the standard that prevails among men. God's
standards are His own, and while we may not comprehend them, it
is not for us to question them.

In Section B, we studied the characteristics of
the members of the kingdom of God. The kingdom demands and
expects of its citizens a whole-hearted and undivided loyalty.
Lacking these qualities one is neither ready nor fit for the
kingdom. Within the kingdom is found a characteristic that is
not given much of a place among the worldly. This character-
istic is humility. In the kingdom of God humility and the true
worth of an individual are recognized. Furthermore the quality
of unlimited forgiveness is a virtue that members of the king-
dom practise, for, while this is also a characteristic of God,
the members themselves are in the kingdom as forgiven men.

In Section C, we dealt with the stumbling blocks
that exclude one from the kingdom of God or the element of
judgment in the kingdom as found in the parables. In a number
of the parables we saw it plainly brought out that men, not God,
exclude themselves from the kingdom by the attitude they take
and the spirit they show so contrary to the kingdom itself. In
the kingdom of God hypocrisy and deceit are utterly foreign
elements. Likewise is unfruitfulness. The kingdom of God de-
mands of its members productiveness if they are to be continued

as members. Lacking these stirring qualities, those who think they may be of the kingdom of God will find themselves outside. Still another way in which men exclude themselves is by their unpreparedness for the coming of the kingdom, for the unforeseen that will test them to the core. All ought to be prepared because no one can otherwise find his way into the kingdom if he does not have this qualification. Another paradoxical situation is seen in the following. The kingdom is such a thing that it would seem to be desired and sought by all. Nevertheless this is not to be found true. Though the most highly desirable thing a man wants when once he has caught a glimpse of it, the fact remains that many do not want it and will not accept it though a free invitation were extended to them to enter it. Finally we saw that the basis of judgment at the end is to be based on the kind of a response we have made to the needs of our fellow men, the least of Christ's brethren. Such are Jesus' teachings of the kingdom of God in the Parables.

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GENERAL SUMMARY

Our purpose in this study, as we stated at the very beginning, has been to make a study of Jesus' teachings of the Kingdom of God in parable. This has limited us quite considerably in the scope of our study. We have not been able to deal with the Kingdom of God in other places nor in some of the more recent studies. Before going directly to a study of the Kingdom of God in parable, we have felt it essential that we should analyze by examining the parable in order that we might not be misled in interpreting what the parables have to say concerning the Kingdom of God. Accordingly we have analyzed and examined the parable from the following points of view: definition, nature, purpose, method of interpretation, and limitations. In defining parable, we noted its Greek derivation and the Hebrew equivalent with proverb. We distinguished between parable and other figures of speech, such as metaphor, simile, analogy, and allegory, emphasizing the fact that the parable always has one great point that it brings out and that this must not be confused or contradicted by lesser elements of truth in the parable. Passing to a consideration of the nature of a parable, we showed that the parable is essentially didactic in purpose and that in the parables of Jesus, there are truths taught that have an element of the eternal in them, unlike the parables spoken in his time. We emphasized the fact that the parable has one important lesson and that any lesser values are not to be confused with this one out-

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thought that Our purpose in this thesis, as we stated at the very beginning, has been to make a study of Jesus' teachings of the kingdom of God in parable. This has limited us quite necessarily to the parables alone. What Jesus said about the kingdom of God in other places has not come in for consideration in this thesis. Before going directly to a study of the kingdom phase in parable, we have felt it essential that we should analytically examine the parable in order that we might not be misled in interpreting what the parables have to say concerning the kingdom of God. Accordingly we have discussed and examined the parable from the following points of view: definition, nature, purpose, method of interpretation, and limitations. In defining parable, we noted its Greek derivation and its Hebrew connection with proverb. We distinguished between parable and other figures of speech, such as metaphor, simile, fable, and allegory, emphasizing the fact that the parable always has one great point that it brings out and that this must not be confused or contradicted by lesser elements of truth in the parable. Passing to a consideration of the nature of a parable, we showed that the parable is essentially didactic in form and that in the parables of Jesus, there are truths taught that have an element of the eternal in them, unlike the parables common in his time. We emphasized the fact that the parable has one important lesson and that any lesser values are not to be confused with this one out-

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Our purpose in this thesis, as we stated at the very beginning, has been to make a study of Jesus' teachings of the Kingdom of God in parables. This has limited us quite necessarily to the parables alone. What Jesus said about the Kingdom of God in other places has not come in for consideration in this thesis. Before going directly to a study of the Kingdom phase in parables, we have felt it essential that we should analytically examine the parable in order that we might not be misled in interpreting what the parables have to say concerning the Kingdom of God. Accordingly we have discussed and examined the parable from the following points of view: definition, nature, purpose, method of interpretation, and limitations. In defining parables, we noted its Greek derivation and its Hebrew connection with proverb. We distinguished between parable and other figures of speech, such as metaphor, simile, fable, and allegory, emphasizing the fact that the parable always has one great point that it brings out and that this must not be confused or contrasted by lesser elements of truth in the parable. Passing to a consideration of the nature of a parable, we showed that the parable is essentially didactic in purpose and that in the parables of Jesus, there are truths taught that have an element of the eternal in them, unlike the parables common in his time. We emphasized the fact that the parable has one important lesson and that any lesser values are not to be contrasted with this one and

standing lesson. The parables as Jesus used them we saw were characterized by a boldness of expression and a penetration of thought that was entirely natural to Jesus.

In studying the purpose of the parable as used by Jesus we saw that cataloging⁴ reasons for Jesus' use of the parable is pedantic, yet necessary in making the study, for Jesus himself was using the parable as a great teaching device and vehicle for the promotion of his ideas. First, his purpose was to meet the immediate occasion yet at the same time to put into parabolic expression teachings of great and eternal principles without having to define them with the exactitude of law so that not only his own age but posterity would have them in a form that would not diminish their reality and value. Second, he used the parable because he wanted to put his teachings more poignantly than he could have done in any other way. Third, he used the parable because it was one way he could teach and be understood. In the fourth place he used the parable as a device for bringing men to a conviction that would result in action, the carrying out of that conviction.

Then we took up the method of interpretation of the parables, and their limitations. The method we saw was to determine whether we were dealing with a parable or not. Then if so, we were to seek the one central truth. Sometimes the situation out of which the parable was spoken would be given and would afford a hint as to the teaching it contains. In studying the limitations of the parables of Jesus, we discovered

teaching lesson. The parables as Jesus used them we saw were characterized by a boldness of expression and a penetration of thought that was entirely natural to Jesus.

In studying the purpose of the parables as used by Jesus we saw that ~~defining~~ reasons for Jesus' use of the parable is pedagogic, yet necessarily in making the study, for Jesus himself was using the parable as a great teaching device and visible for the promotion of his ideas. First, his purpose was to meet the immediate occasion yet at the same time to put into parabolic expression teachings of great and eternal principle which having to do with the eternal life of man, he felt that not only his own age but posterity would have them in a form that would not diminish their reality and value. Second, he used the parable because he wanted to put his teachings more boldly than he could have done in any other way. Third, he used the parable because it was one way he could teach and be understood. In the fourth place he used the parable as a device for bringing men to a conviction that would result in action, the carrying out of that conviction.

Then we took up the method of interpretation of the parables, and their limitations. The method we saw was to determine whether we were dealing with a parable or not. Then if so, we were to seek the one central truth. Sometimes the action out of which the parable was spoken would be given and would afford a hint as to the meaning it contains. In studying the limitations of the parables of Jesus, we discovered

that there was a possible moral problem in one's misunderstanding the Master. This was cleared up when we saw that the possible discrepancies are apart from the one central truth which alone is important, all else in the parable being incidental. This difficulty is thus eliminated by the proper emphasis on this one central truth. Having taken up these characteristics of the parable and learned what the parable is like, we then began our consideration of the individual parables to learn what they teach concerning the kingdom of God.

We divided our study of the kingdom of God into three sections for the convenience that there is in understanding our subject, rather than from any idea that the Master himself so catalogued his teaching of the kingdom of God, for he did not. In the first section we studied what the parables have to say concerning the nature of the kingdom of God. This section dealt most generally with the various aspects of what the kingdom of God is like. The parables of Spontaneous Growth The Mustard Seed and The Leaven teach that the kingdom is a dynamic thing that grows. It is both visible and material, although the Parable of The Leaven reveals that the kingdom also acts as an invisible power that permeates silently quietly and invisibly the object in which it is placed. In the companion pieces, the Parables of The Tares and The Dragnet, the kingdom is seen to have within it alien elements as well as true citizens, yet due to the difficulty of weeding out such foreign

that there was a possible moral parallel in our understanding of the Master. This was cleared up when we saw that the possible disconnection was apart from the central truth which alone is important, and also in the parallel being incidental. This distinction is thus eliminated by the proper emphasis on this one central truth. Having taken up these characteristics of the parallel and learned what the parallel is like, we then began our consideration of the individual parallel to learn what they teach concerning the Kingdom of God.

We divided our study of the Kingdom of God into three sections for the convenience that there is in understanding the our subject, rather than from any idea that the Master himself so categorized his teaching of the Kingdom of God, for he did not. In the first section we studied what the parallel have to say concerning the nature of the Kingdom of God. This section dealt more generally with the various aspects of what the Kingdom of God is like. The parallel of God's Kingdom grows. The Master's Seed and the Leaven teach that the Kingdom is a dynamic thing that grows. It is both visible and material, although the Parallel of the Leaven reveals that the Kingdom also acts as an invisible power that pervades silently and invisibly the object in which it is placed. In the second section, the Parallel of the Tares and the Wheat, the Kingdom is seen to have within it also elements as well as the evil ones, yet due to the difference of seedling and wheat together

elements there must be patience and forbearance until the day comes which reveals clearly the poisonous darnel or the bad fish.

The next parables we considered were the Parables of The Treasure and The Merchant, in which the kingdom is presented as having a static, distinctly material quality, and is worth to one who finds it all that he has to sell in order to purchase it. In one case, however, the viewpoint is that the kingdom is a gift --- a man stumbles upon it by accident. In the other case it is an achievement--- the man seeking goodly pearls finds the most valuable and wonderful one of all. Nevertheless both willingly sell all their possessions in order to to obtain ownership of the object of desire.

In the parables of conflict and misunderstanding between the old and the new, we saw that like elements are not to be mixed with unlike elements; that each nevertheless has a place of its own. The teachings of the Scriptures will have their own place in the kingdom, but are not to be mixed with the new wine of Jesus' teaching. Still he who comes into Jesus' kingdom is one who finds there old and new treasures. Lastly in the first section we studied the Parable of The Laborers In The Vineyard, in which we learned that the standards of judgment and reward in the kingdom of God are entirely different from those that prevail among men. God sees deeper than man, and rewards in the light of this power to see clearly all men and all relationships.

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In sections B and C, we have dealt with the general subject of the characteristics of members of the kingdom of God, dividing the subject into two phases, section B dealing with the marks of the citizens of the kingdom of God, and section C dealing with the marks of aliens in the kingdom of God or the element of judgment in the kingdom. From the Parables of The Uncompleted Tower and The Rash Warfare Of The King, we learned that the kingdom demands of its members whole-hearted and undivided loyalty to Jesus who stands for the kingdom. If one does not have this, one is not ready for the kingdom. The Parables of The Chier Seats and The Pharisee and The Publican teach that humility is characteristic of members of the kingdom of God, and that true worth is recognized in this kingdom. Then coming to the Parable of The Unmerciful Servant, we saw that the kingdom expects of its citizens the quality of forgiveness, for its citizens are in the kingdom because they themselves have been forgiven for debts they never could pay. If they are thus within the kingdom as forgiven subjects, they should exercise the same quality of forgiveness in their relations with one another.

Section C dealt with the stumbling blocks that keep men from the kingdom or else keep them aliens in the kingdom. Bound up with these aspects we found to be the element of judgment. With regard to the latter we realized upon study of the parables that God does not arbitrarily exclude men from

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Section C dealt with the stumbling blocks that keep men from the kingdom or else keep them aliens in the kingdom. Bound up with these aspects we found to be the element of judgment. With regard to the latter we realized upon study of the parables that God does not arbitrarily exclude men from

the kingdom. God wants all who will come; but men exclude themselves we found by the attitude they take contrary to the spirit the kingdom of God demands. The Parable of The Two Sons illustrates the fact that it is what a man does that counts, not what he may say. Hypocrisy and pretence keep one from the kingdom, for in the kingdom of God it is what a man actually does, not what he affects, that determines his being of the kingdom or not. The Parables of The Wicked Husbandmen and The Rejected Cornerstone center about Jesus we saw, and teach that Israel loses her place of leadership because she has not accepted the truth represented in (the prophets and) Jesus. Life bears out the truth of this. Unless we are productive of true service, we forfeit the leadership we may be holding. From the Parable of The Slighted Marriage Feast or The Great Supper, we learned that the kingdom of God is not always welcomed by men; that its invitation is often ignored by many who would be expected ordinarily to welcome it, or else treated with indifference by some, like the uninvited guest, who would join it without fulfilling any of its obligations. By their attitude men shut themselves from the kingdom and its privileges. In the Parable of The Ten Virgins we saw inculcated the need for a preparedness to meet the problems of life and the testings which are bound to come to all some time. Some will be found unprepared like the five foolish virgins. Some will be found ready for whatever storms blow about them. While we noted the well-known lesson of the Parable of The Talents, we found the emphasis is placed around

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 like the wise. While we noted the well-known lesson of the
 Parable of the Talents, we found the message is placed around

the man with the one talent. He is just as responsible for using his one talent or pound as is the man with several. Failure to use whatever we have merits the adverse judgment of the Lord. In the last parable with which we dealt, that of The Last Judgment, we saw that the basis of judgment is measured by the response we have made to the needs of the least of our brethren. Such are the teachings of Jesus concerning the kingdom of God in parable. Mark records of Jesus' teaching the people that "without a parable spake he nothing unto them", 4:34. This was an emphatic way of emphasizing the way Jesus taught. The remarkable part of this in connection with our thesis is the great extent to which we find how the parables of Jesus embody the teaching of the Master on the kingdom of God. Without these masterful parables the teachings of Jesus on the kingdom of God as well as on God Himself would for us be immeasurably impoverished. As it is, however, the parables have given us an insight into the kingdom of God that we might not otherwise have received had we had to depend upon the teachings of Jesus elsewhere.

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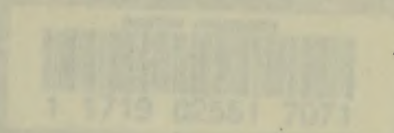
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